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A FOUR MONTHS' TOUR,

ETC.

A

FOUR MONTHS' TOUR

IN

The East.



BY

J. R. ANDREWS, ESQ.

DUBLIN

JAMES McGLASHAN, 50 UPPER SACKVILLE-ST.

WM. S. ORR AND CO., LONDON AND LIVERPOOL.

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PREFACE.

THE following pages were hastily written, and sent home from time to time as opportunity occurred. They are now published, chiefly with a view to private circulation amongst the Author's friends.

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A FOUR MONTHS' TOUR.

CHAPTER I.

The Voyage Out.

I LEFT Marseilles on the 4th of February, 1852, in the French Post-Office steamer, La Caire, bound for Alexandria. A small boat belonging to the company was moored alongside the wharf for the accommodation of the passengers, and in it we were taken to the steamer, at the other end of the harbour, through the dirty waters and crowded shipping which characterise the port of Marseilles. There was considerable delay in starting, which was announced to take place at nine o'clock in the morning, but it was nearly twelve before we steamed out of the harbour. There were very few passengers, chiefly French

and Syrian. The bells of the different churches were pealing forth their sonorous music, this being some particular holiday. The morning was bright, warm, and cheerful—a great contrast to the dark, foggy atmosphere of Paris and London, which I had just left.

The sea was rough for the first few hours, but went down towards evening. We had a fine view of the south coast of France, and were not out of sight of land until five o'clock in the afternoon.

Dinner was served at half-past five. I was the only passenger present. Our cuisine on board every day was excellent: for breakfast, we had several courses of meat, vegetables, and poultry, wine and coffee. A lunch was placed on the table at one for those who chose, and at dinner there were twelve or fifteen courses, with wine, liqueurs, and dessert. In the evening tea and coffee were served. During the voyage the nights were calm and lovely; the moon was at the full, and a bright cloudless sky enabled me to enjoy the evenings on the Mediterranean. The next morning we were running amongst a cluster of small green islands off the coast of Sardinia, and had a close view of that coast, and the

high range of hills which divides that island from north to south. Later in the day we came in view of the coast of Sicily, and the town of Marsala, distant about ten or fifteen miles.

On the following evening, towards eight o'clock, we came in sight of the island of Malta, and at eleven o'clock we entered the harbour of Valetta, having made an exceedingly quick passage for a French steamer. Going on deck early the next morning, I beheld the town of Valetta and the fortifications sparkling in the sunshine, built upon a platform of rocks some hundreds of feet high. The town commands a noble view. In the harbour were several war-steamers and frigates. Around our steamer a number of curious little boats were clustered, their owners talking a patois of French, Italian, and Arabic, with occasionally a few words of English, sufficient to make known their object, which was, to take you on shore for a shilling.

After breakfast the disagreeable operation of coaling commenced, to escape which I took a stroll on shore.

The streets are steep, narrow, and crowded with people in every imaginable costume. At the different corners are effigies of saints and

Virgin Marys, stuck up conspicuously. Innumerable bells from the churches kept up a perpetual ringing, and every vehicle that passed along the streets was provided with a similar nuisance.

The palace of the Governor is a splendid building, in the principal part of the town, and occupying one side of the square. Near to it, is the celebrated Church of St. John, where the Knights Templars are buried. I could not, however, obtain a view of the tesselated pavement, as it was protected by a thick matting, which covered the entire. The fortifications are, one would think, impregnable: they surround the town and harbours. Beyond the palace of the Governor is the principal street of business. There are several good hotels, and a small theatre. The new church, built by the late Queen Dowager, is on the other side of the town, overlooking the quarantine harbour. There must have been some great blundering or roguery, to have spent £100,000 in the erection of this edifice. It is built of beautiful white stone, with a lofty, handsome spire. There are no galleries in the interior.

Travellers going eastward generally pay Mr. Muir, the enterprising bookseller, a visit. He

is an excellent authority upon all matters connected with the wants of travellers going to Egypt; and is, moreover, well able, from his various stock, which is not confined to books, to supply their wants, mental and bodily, from a guide-book to a camp-bedstead. He is also exceedingly obliging and communicative. I peeped into the courts of law, where uncouth, slovenly-dressed barristers were bustling about amongst their clients, and not very dignified-looking judges were dealing forth, in the name of Queen Victoria, Maltese laws to people gathered from all quarters of the globe. A more heterogeneous population is not to be met with in the world, than in Malta; and all the coins of Europe pass current there. During the winter season, a great number of invalids from England make Malta their residence. The climate is delightful at that season, but in summer the heat is unbearable: there is no shade beyond what the narrow streets afford, consequently in the summer months Valetta is deserted.

We left Malta at five o'clock in the afternoon, several fresh passengers having come on board, chiefly English and American. Amongst them we had an American lady and gentleman, who occupied

the ladies' cabin; a party of fast young Englishmen, going crocodile-shooting up the Nile, were grumbling because the sport could not commence until they reached Thebes, a sail of fifteen days beyond Cairo. In the fore-cabin there were Turkish soldiers, returning from their military education in France; an Arab merchant, with his European merchandise, going to Damascus; a French lady, going to join her husband somewhere in the East; and a few others, presenting no particular mark of country or profession. Among the list I must not omit to mention two, at least, who were entered as "passengers" on the way-bill —I mean two magnificent bloodhounds, consigned to the Pacha of Egypt; they had an excellent large kennel on board, where every care was taken of them, and in the daytime they were permitted to roam the deck at pleasure, being great pets with the sailors and passengers.

Our captain, who was formerly in the French navy, spoke English fluently; and by his courteous attentions the voyage was rendered pleasant to all. At night we amused ourselves with watching the phosphorescence in the water, which appeared in a perfect blaze of light in the wake of the vessel.

Our course continued steady the two following

days, the wind being favourable. In the evening the captain informed us that he expected to reach Alexandria the next night, though it would not be possible to go into harbour before morning, in consequence of the intricacy of the navigation.

This was one of the loveliest starlight nights I ever beheld. The evening star set about nine o'clock; and such was the clearness of the atmosphere, that we could watch it on the verge of the horizon until it finally disappeared below the water's edge, having, for the last few moments, the appearance of a lighthouse by night from the shore. About ten o'clock another beautiful object presented itself—the moon rising out of the water suddenly, without a cloud intervening; it resembled a ball of fire, and appeared to rise rapidly, owing, of course, to its nearness to the horizon when first seen. There is something peculiarly solemn and delightful in a quiet walk upon deck at night—millions of stars shining overhead, "the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever." All is quiet; the passengers are below in their berths or in the cabin—occasionally the song is heard far away forward among the sailors—the deep-throated mastiff of the Pacha barks at something; and the thoughts go back to farm-houses in Eng-

land—cheerful faces round winter's fires—frost and snow, and dreary, happy old England.

The last day of our voyage wore away in watching for the distant land, which lies low; but we were doomed to be disappointed, for darkness set in, and it was some hours after I had retired to my cabin before the paddle-wheels ceased to revolve, and we were at anchor outside the harbour of Alexandria, about two miles distant.

CHAPTER II.

Alexandria, Cairo, and the Pyramids.

We entered the harbour the next morning, at day-break; a number of small boats soon gathered around us, and in a few minutes we were skimming across the smooth waters to the shore, distant not more than a quarter of a mile, for which the boatmen demanded ten piasters each. On landing we were surrounded by a noisy crowd of camel and donkey-drivers; in the midst of their contentions as to who should take possession of us, the Custom-House officers approached, and the baggage was removed to the Custom-House—a mere shed, with a few half-naked Egyptians for officers, who contented themselves with merely peeping into the portmanteaus.

I preferred walking to the hotel; and, having procured a porter for my luggage, we proceeded through the narrow, crowded streets and bazaars of the old town, to the Frank quarter, a most novel and exciting walk. Long-bearded men were seen

smoking their two-yard pipes, sitting upon their counters; in the centre of the streets files of camels moved majestically along with their burthens; whilst great numbers of donkey-drivers were urging on their animals to and fro, as if trade was brisk. Sometimes we passed a harem on donkey-back—mere bundles of animated white linen, with two black eyes just visible. In twenty minutes we reached the hotel, where a substantial breakfast awaited us.

After breakfast a party was formed, and donkeys were in request. Away we started, at a brisk trot, some ten or twelve, with the drivers at our heels, helter-skelter, through streets, narrow, dark, and dirty, to the Pacha's palace—a large building, furnished handsomely, but quite in the European style, and, therefore, not what we cared to see. Thence off, in a contrary direction, to Cleopatra's Needle, the particulars of which every one is acquainted with. Afterwards I took a quiet stroll by myself through the town. The shops of the natives are quite strange to a European. Imagine the marble slab of a fishmonger's shop, boarded all round to the ceiling, except the street front, and a person sitting upon it, tailor-wise, with a "tarboosh," or turban,

upon his head, a long Turkish pipe in his mouth, with a loose-flowing robe thrown over him, and you have the Egyptian shopkeeper. The customer stands in the street, and the goods are so arranged round the proprietor, that he has seldom occasion to rise in order to reach anything. The bazaars are much the same as the streets, only narrower, and are not covered in as in England. Bookbinders, shoemakers, pipe venders, tobacco dealers, calico and European goods dealers, and sellers of caps called the tarboosh, are the most numerous. The money is very conflicting and difficult to understand, except upon one principle, that of always losing by it. Thus, for instance, the coins of the country are piasters and majeedes. One hundred piasters are usually worth a sovereign; but as you cannot get enough of such small coin for ordinary purposes, the bankers pay you in silver majeedes, of eighteen piasters each, whilst the Government only allow seventeen for them when taking your place to Cairo. Then your banker's bills and circular notes are only convertible into the coin of the country at a loss of five or six per cent. Gold is the best kind of money for Egypt or Syria, and I advise every one to take with him English

sovereigns in preference to any other kind of money, if he can make up his mind to the risk.

Alexandria possesses a fine square, formerly docks, where the different consuls, bankers, and European merchants reside. Here also are the two principal hotels, which occupy imposing situations. A new church (English episcopal) is now being erected in the same square. The site has been given by the Pacha, a most valuable gift. It will be by far the most imposing public building in Alexandria. The funds are chiefly provided in England. There are several English residents, and the transit passengers amount, in the course of the year, to a considerable number. As it is the only Protestant church in Alexandria, there appear good grounds for concluding it will meet with support. The Roman Catholics have a large church in the neighbourhood. The Frank quarter, of which this square may be considered the centre, extends a considerable distance in the direction of the new harbour. The houses are lofty and well built in this quarter, and rents are high. Small gardens are attached to the larger class of houses, where the date, the fig, and tamerisk trees are conspicuous, especially the former, with its beautiful pendant boughs.

Nothing strikes the eye so much, or serves to remind a person that he is in an Eastern country, as these trees. The flowers, too, are very beautiful. On leaving the Pacha's palace, each was presented with a bouquet of choice flowers, nicely arranged. The donkey-drivers accost all Englishmen in the streets as either doctors or captains; but as all men are not doctors or captains, this arrangement is not always satisfactory. One day I was looking into a mosque, where a number of Mussulmen were going through their devotions, prostrating themselves opposite the bare walls, when, suddenly, I was pulled away by the donkey-driver, who had been calling "captain" in vain. I was unconsciously offending the prejudices of the Mussulmen in the street, whilst those in the mosque seemed to prefer being "looked at" rather than otherwise. In fact, I have generally observed throughout all Mussulman countries, that the followers of Mahomet pick out the most conspicuous situations to perform their devotions; and on board the steamers they would frequently spread their carpets, and go down on their knees, close to where a group of Europeans were standing.

The women wear a white muslin covering,

which fits loosely over the entire person, and when sitting cross-ways, as they do on donkeys, they look more like a bale of goods than human beings. A little foot in a red slipper, dark coloured hands, the nails coloured with pink, and a pair of dark eyes and eyebrows, is all that these divinities permit you to behold. However, it is enough in all conscience. Ugliness is too mild a term for the Egyptian ladies at Alexandria.

Pompey's Pillar, the Catacombs, and Cleopatra's Needle, are the only interesting monuments of antiquity to be seen in Alexandria. It is singular that names so comparatively modern should have been given to these celebrated objects. Both the obelisk and the pillar are long antecedent to the era of Pompey or Cleopatra. The Catacombs and the so-called Cleopatra's bath are not worth the trouble of a visit.

We left Alexandria on Friday morning, at eight o'clock. Our company consisted of four Russians, four Englishmen, and an American lady and gentleman ; we had chartered the steamer, for which the transit company charged us fifty pounds, exclusive of board ; the first six hours was along the canal. At Atfeh we reached the Nile—an agreeable change into a broad river and a larger steamer.

Atfeh is a miserable town ; the natives thronged the sides of the river, and rushed into it for paras, a coin equal to a farthing, which some of our passengers threw into the water.

Mud villages are almost the only objects seen on the banks of the Nile between Atfeh and Cairo. Occasionally, a few palm-trees and minarets are passed. At midnight an alarm of fire caused us all to rush upon deck ; the funnel had become red hot, and had set fire to the deck. A few buckets of water, however, soon set all to rights, and no damage was done beyond that part of the deck around the chimney. It appears the accident arose from the man on the watch neglecting his duty ; he was saying his prayers, and, with his face to the East, was bowing and kissing the deck when we surprised him. The captain and crew are all Mussulmen ; we took it in turns, for the remainder of the night, to sit up. We reached Cairo about three o'clock on Saturday afternoon ; the distance from Alexandria is only about 180 miles, yet we were thirty hours in performing it. Donkey-riding is as much in vogue at Cairo as in Alexandria : on reaching the pier the majority of the company selected this mode of conveyance to the hotels in the Frank quarter, about an English

mile from the river. I found the British hotel full of American and English tourists. I was the only one of our party who secured apartments; the rest went to the Oriental hotel. The scene in the courtyard was novel: parties were preparing to cross the long Desert to Syria; tents, saddle-bags, water-bags, camp-bedsteads and stools were piled up along the walls—strange, turbaned-looking men were walking backwards and forwards. In another direction the baggage and appointments of a large party just returned from the second cataract, were being unloaded from five or six camels.

After dinner I retired early, having had but little rest since leaving Alexandria. The next day was Sunday, and on the day following I commenced exploring Cairo.

The streets are all narrow, dirty, and unpaved; they are crowded with people from morning till night, and locomotion is exceedingly difficult. The shops in the bazaars are mere cupboards on a large scale. The proprietor sits, as usual, tailor-wise, with his "tchbook" in one hand and a cup of coffee in the other, a red fez cap upon his head, and a pair of pointed red morocco slippers on his feet. I purchased a fez from a dignified old fellow, with a beard half a yard long. The transaction com-

menced by his handing me the tchbook, and motioning for me to sit down upon the board. Double the price was asked, and it ended in my paying three times the worth of the article ; but then the process of making a purchase was such a novelty ; and if one does not happen to be in a hurry, which is seldom the case in the East, it is agreeable rather than otherwise.

The slave market is no longer one of the sights of Cairo ; a more disgusting exhibition than the one I visited it is impossible to imagine. After purchasing a few piasters' worth of bread to give to the poor wretches, I proceeded up a dirty, narrow staircase ; in a dark cell I found eight or ten females, of different ages, Ethiopians and Nubians, quite black, and most hideous-looking creatures, their hair covered with grease, which hung in festoons down to their shoulders : they appeared to me to be far inferior in the scale of being to their fellow-sufferers in the slave states of America. The men and boys were confined in a court below. On making my appearance amongst them, a demand for "backshish" was instantly raised ; and the bread was devoured in a very short space of time by about twenty men and boys. The price of a slave varies from £10 to £20, according to

colour and age. I was told the white slaves are kept at the private houses of the slave-merchants, and are brought round for sale only when a rich customer is likely to be met with.

THE PYRAMIDS.

At nine o'clock on Thursday morning I started on "donkey-back" to see the oldest buildings in the world that human hands have assisted to form. The road leads through groves of date trees, and then along the banks of the river Nile for two or three miles. At Old Cairo the ferry-boat placed us on the opposite bank. It was an amusing scene to watch the donkeys carried on board by two men; the animals were lifted off their legs and pushed into the boat. The camels are much more docile ; they walk on board, loaded heavily, and, at the word of command, kneel down, and remain patiently in that position until the boat reaches the opposite shore. The road, or rather pathway, for a couple of miles, is through a large clover meadow. The pyramids do not appear particularly large ; you have them in view for the rest of the journey, a distance of some six miles : the approach is over a sand-hill. The Sheik of the

pyramids and his tribe are ready to receive all visitors, upon one condition only—namely, "backshish." This preliminary settled, you are escorted by a couple or three strong fellows, dressed in a single white garment, to the foot of the great pyramid; two men, holding you by the hands, then pull you up step by step. It was much more steep than I had expected, and the stones are worn away very much; in some places the step is three feet high, and the ascent is altogether laborious. The view from the summit, although extensive, is not by any means remarkably so, nor are there any objects of interest to be seen. One side (the west) is an unbounded desert of sand, extending from the pyramid as far as the eye can reach: to the east the view is bounded by the hills behind Cairo; and north and south the course of the river is traced through a flat plain covered with rich vegetation. A few weeks ago this plain was all under water; the clover is now two or three feet in height. Melons, vegetable-marrow, tomatas, and green peas are now fit to gather. On descending I found a lunch of cold chicken and London porter very acceptable. I afterwards ventured inside the pyramid; but a sense of suffocation was so great that I returned quickly. This

passage more resembled a London sewer in size, only not so lofty, wedged in by enormous granite blocks on all sides. Having to descend an inclined plane of eighty feet in length, and to ascend another of the same distance before reaching the chambers—the confined air and bad smells, but, above all, the appearance of a Russian gentleman, more dead than alive, just dragged to the entrance on his return from the interior, decided me not to venture any farther. The sphinx is ten minutes' walk from the pyramid ; it is cut out of the solid rock, and is very much worn away, so that the features do not strike the beholder at once: the large flat nose and broad features resemble very much the Egyptian of the present day.

The ride home was very hot—the sun almost overpowering. On the whole, I do not think the pyramids equal to expectation. Imagination can very easily, and does frequently, exceed the reality of most things in this life; but I never felt it more so than in the pyramids.

CHAPTER III.

Cairo.

THE British Hotel was formerly under Waghorn's management, when the Overland mail was first established. The present proprietor is an Englishman, and has been in Egypt eleven years. His house is usually quite full during the winter months, independently of the passengers by the Overland route to and from India. He has, besides the hotel, the cuisine of all the steamers on the Nile, and is also the providore at the stations in the Desert between Cairo and Suez. Yet he is always grumbling; he says his servants rob him, and there are so many different nations amongst his domestics, that they are always quarreling as to which man is the best—the Englishman, the Maltese, the Greek, the Armenian, the Egyptian, the Turk, the Arab, the Frenchman, the German, or the Syrian. Shephard says, the Greek makes the best servant.

The bill of fare was tolerably good during my stay, though quantity rather than quality seemed to have the preference in the eyes of the manager. Not so, however, with the majority of the company, who complained, sometimes unavailingly, of the toughness of the poultry, and the goaty flavour of the mutton. From forty to fifty usually sat down to dinner every day; among the number were a few ladies. After dinner, which was never over before eight o'clock, the company separated; some to smoke, others to billiards, and a few to music. There is an excellent billiard and reading-room, and in the dining-room, which is a fine, handsome, lofty apartment, is a very good piano.

The visitors are chiefly from England and America, in nearly equal proportions. The majority came out in November and December, and have been up the Nile. In about a fortnight or three weeks more, they will all have left, chiefly for Syria. Several are invalids, which the savage climate of England has banished during the winter months. An Englishman considers himself at liberty to dress how he pleases in the East, consequently one sees a half-and-half style of thing. The upper story is "a la Turque," the

rest "Anglaise." Then he studies a few words of Arabic; struts about with his "pipe-bearer," and "talks" to his "dragoman" about Colonel This or Lord That. Such is the specimen Anglaise to be met with in Cairo.

Shephard's bed-rooms are wretched in point of comfort, at least mine was; the room was well enough, but the furniture was the most miserable attempt for an Englishman to make, imaginable: a bed so small, or rather bedstead, that it is dangerous to sleep in it, as you are sure to fall out before morning, no matter how quietly you may repose; a pillow and bolster that would very easily go into my coat-pocket; a looking-glass that shows one eye up at the top of the glass, and the other at the bottom; windows, that won't shut when open, and won't open when shut; a piece of carpet not quite so large as a chest of drawers; a wash-hand stand on three legs, propped up by a chair. I removed the chair, and down came the whole machine, smashing everything. There are no fire-places or chimneys, consequently no ventilation. Mosquito curtains there are; but as to keeping out the mosquitos, that is quite another thing; "mais chacun a son gout"—if people will leave their

comfortable homes and firesides to roam, they must take the consequences.

The mosques, with the exception of two or three, are very shabby. They are all built upon one plan: the court, or colonnade, with a fountain in the centre, open to the sky, and a deep recess covered with matting, where the people say their prayers, after they have washed their feet at the fountain. This recess is usually a lofty apartment; there is a pulpit and a desk, where the Koran is read to the people every Friday. By far the most handsome mosque in Cairo, except the one now building at the citadel, is that of Sultan Hassan. I have been in several; no objection whatever is made to a European entering, if he put on a pair of slippers over his boots, which are provided for that purpose. It is usual to give a small gratuity on leaving. The mosque on the citadel hill, which was begun by Mehemet Ali, is not yet finished. It is in the Eastern style of architecture, and has a magnificent dome in the centre, richly ornamented in the Alhambra style. The pillars, pilasters, and inside walls are of oriental alabaster. The effect of the polished material is very fine.

A visit to the bazaars is always amusing.

Every Monday morning auctions take place, and they are consequently crowded. Some cheap purchases may sometimes be picked up on these occasions. They are not conducted upon the European plan; but each auctioneer goes up and down the bazaar, shouting out the money bid for the article, which he holds up over his head for all to see and examine; often an amber mouth-piece, a shawl, a scarf, a lady's dress, or pair of embroidered slippers. The highest bidder is, of course, the purchaser.

The bazaars in Cairo are long, narrow passages, having shops on each side, with the centre open to the sky. They differ, in this respect, very little from the streets. The Turkish, the Arab, and the European bazaars are each famous for their goods: the former is the best in Cairo. One of the most costly articles to be found in these places are ladies' slippers, and a wealthy person will frequently pay 800 or 1,000 piasters for a single pair. Amber mouth-pieces are also very expensive, sometimes amounting to £80, or £100 each.

Returning from the bazaars the other day, I met a marriage procession. It was a very comical affair. First came a merry fellow, with his face

painted all over in divers colours: then followed a man beating a tom-tom, or drum: then came two boys, playing upon some instrument resembling a guitar; and afterwards two men carrying a machine not unlike what Punch and Judy are exhibited in: then came ten or fifteen women, making a most horrible noise: lastly came the bride, attended by her mother, under a canopy. The bride was covered so completely, that it was impossible either for her to see or be seen. Every ten or fifteen yards the procession stopped, and the women made a noise similar to that boys are accustomed to do in the fields, to frighten the birds away. The procession stopped at the door of the bridegroom, where I saw them enter; and, after a few ceremonies, the company returned, leaving the bride behind. The "happy" fellow now beholds his future wife for the first time in his life. Such is marriage in the East!

A TURKISH BATH.

I mustered up courage one day to take a Turkish bath. From all the accounts I had read of it, I was quite prepared for what followed. Ushered into a colonnade, surrounded by divans,

open to the sky, having a fountain in the centre, here I was told to undress. The next step was mysterious: a great tall Arab approached; he seized hold of me by the hands; he led me away from the companionship of my dragoman, into a passage, long, dark, and disagreeable. At the end of this passage he opened a door, from whence issued such a volume of steam and hot air, that it was almost impossible to breathe. However, I held my breath, and followed, or was rather dragged along. Next he led me up to a marble "muktus," or tank, from whence I felt inclined to run away, and to knock him down; but curiosity prevailed—I submitted in dogged silence, and let him do with me as he liked. He commenced by rubbing me with a horse-hair glove, so hard that the skin peeled off: next he threw several bowls of hot water over me: then he went to the "tow" department, and returning with an immense piece, he made a huge bowl of soap-suds, and having succeeded to his satisfaction, he next proceeded to cover me with the contents of his bowl. This part of the operation was the most disagreeable. Then he pushed me into the tank full of hot water, where, after laying in soak for ten minutes, I was taken out, and

a barber approached, razor in hand. I had just strength enough left to shake my fist at him, and he retired. Oh, with what delight did I follow my bathman back again into the dressing-room, where dry clothing and a cup of coffee awaited me. But before being permitted to dress, I had to undergo one more operation—that of having all my bones made to crack! I was permitted at last to escape, after two hours' suffering; but the effects afterwards are very agreeable. "Tell him to use me gently," said I to the dragoman. "My lord, the great Ingleeze, must be used like a lady!" said he to the man.

The English have now a cemetery in Cairo. Formerly it was necessary to hire a grave from the monks at Old Cairo. I visited the English cemetery one afternoon. There are very few interments; those already there are the graves of young Indian officers, whose melancholy deaths are briefly recorded. "Died on his road home from India, after crossing the Desert." What a tale is told in that word "home," and how it comes over one meeting with it here in this strange land! Yet was there something here that called to mind our quiet churchyards: the rooks were cawing overhead. How like the old

familiar rooks on —— green and —— churchyard. And musing thus on days gone by, I became unconscious that I was alone in a strange land. How happy are moments like these, when the mind is carried away to scenes of days long gone by—to the quiet village churchyard, where

"The rude forefathers of the hamlet sleep."

Some such dreams must have been the hope of these poor fellows lying here—hoping, perhaps, to see "home" once again—hurrying away from an Indian grave, to find one in Cairo! Rousing myself from these reflections, I observed the following matter-of-fact inscription upon a gravestone near me :—

"This Tablet,
With the grave adjacent,
Has been purchased
By Mr. Ths. S. Bennett,
For a term which expires
On the Day of Judgment:
Being the last Tribute paid to
The memory of a beloved
And affectionate wife,
Jane, otherwise Wilson,
Who departed this life
14 August, 1850."

There are no lights at night in the streets of Cairo. If a person goes out after sunset, it is

necessary to take a lantern, or otherwise he is liable to be stopped by the patrol. The appearance of these lanterns moving along between the trees, as seen from the steps of the hotel, is very singular. Under the trees opposite the hotel, and about the steps, the Arabs of the Desert sleep at night : they leave their camels just outside the gates, on the edge of the Desert, and here they wait in the vicinity of the hotels, to be engaged by parties intending to cross the Desert. Several parties have proceeded across during the last few days. The long Desert takes about forty-two days to reach Jerusalem ; the short one, seventeen days.

Cairo has a population amounting to upwards of two hundred thousand. There are seventy thousand Coptic Christians. Christianity has, however, no hold at all in Egypt. The Copts, in their form of worship, resemble the Greek Church. Their churches abound in pictures of saints, but no images. The Copts are the ancient Egyptians. It would be interesting to ascertain how Christianity was introduced into Egypt—especially how the remote provinces of Nubia and Ethiopia became colonies of professing Christians. Would the converted eunuch that we read of in

the New Testament have been the means of carrying the Gospel into the latter country.? The Church at Alexandria was probably the nucleus of the present Coptic religion. St. Peter dates one of his Epistles from Babylon, the ancient name of Old Cairo, about two miles to the south of the modern capital. It is not ascertained that he planted a Church there, though it is, of course, probable he attempted to introduce the Christian religion wherever he found himself.

The Mahommedan religion offers formidable obstacles, humanly speaking, to the introduction of Christianity. Our Church Missionary Society has had a station in Cairo for several years, but they have never yet made a single convert from the Mahommedan faith. The reply of an enlightened Mahommedan to a missionary is characteristic of the race of Moslems: "Your religion," said he, "gives me three Gods and one wife: mine gives me three wives and one God: I prefer my own."

CHAPTER IV.

The Nile, and Upper Egypt.

An opportunity having occurred of joining a party going to Thebes and the cataracts in a steamer, I very gladly availed myself of it. There is much delay and difficulty at this season of the year with a sailing boat, and as the weather is becoming warmer every day, a protracted voyage is by no means desirable. The Nile steamers have made several trips this season to Asouan and back. The usual time has been from eighteen to twenty days. They are small and inconvenient, and for the amount of accommodation furnished, are very expensive. Unless a certain number of passengers are booked, the expense is still greater, the deficiency having to be made up by the passengers, as it was in our case. As this, however, is the first season the steamers have been placed at the disposal of tourists, by the Government, the arrangements are not as yet complete; and their success having been consi-

derable, greater accommodation is preparing for next year.

At five o'clock on Wednesday afternoon, February 25, we left the wharf at Boolak. The passengers consisted of four Russian gentlemen; a Madras merchant, his son and daughter, and their two servants; a clergyman from Ceylon; a raw Scotchman, whose propensity to shoot at something or other from the deck of the steamer, during the whole voyage, became a great nuisance; an invalid gentleman, and myself. The European agent accompanied us, to act as interpreter. The captain and crew were all Mahommedans. Our cuisine was under the care of the proprietor of the British hotel at Cairo, whose servants attended to the wants of the passengers—an excellent arrangement, which gave great satisfaction. The table was well supplied every day from the ample stores laid in at Cairo. I have great pleasure in recommending our providore, Fortunato, a Maltese, to any party going up the Nile in a sailing boat. He is to be met with at Shephard's hotel.

Early the next morning we reached Benesooef, seventy-seven miles from Cairo. Here we remained two hours to coal, and proceeded on to

Mínieh, eighty miles farther, which we reached at seven o'clock in the evening. We passed a party of Englishmen in a dahabah, the most comfortable kind of sailing boat on the Nile. The Pacha was staying near to Mínieh, on board a fine steamer, and our captain was ordered to wait upon his highness. The inquiries which the Pacha made were of quite a commercial character—"How many passengers, and how much money have you?" Early on Friday morning we proceeded on shore to examine the grottos of Telel Amarna, distant about four miles from the river, across a burning desert, mounted upon donkeys, destitute of saddle or bridle. Our party rode along to the side of a hill, and at an elevation of some two or three hundred feet above the plain, reached a series of grottos, excavated out of the solid rock. They are supposed to be of very ancient origin, but of what period it is not conjectured.

The hieroglyphics are in a good state of preservation, and many of the colours are quite fresh, although fully exposed to the action of the sun for some hours every day. I particularly noticed some ovals in beautiful vermilion and ultramarine colours, as fresh as if done yes-

terday, although in an exposed position, and near to the entrance. What a dry climate must Egypt possess, thus to preserve for so many centuries these most delicate colours.

We returned to the steamer after an absence of three hours, and continued our course up the river to Osioot. Here we passed a steamer returning to Cairo, having on board twelve or fifteen passengers, all English and American. She left Cairo on the 12th. At Osioot is the residence of the Governor of Upper Egypt. There is a population of about 20,000; out of which 1,000 are Christians, and the rest Mahommedans. Donkeys were in requisition again, and after breakfast we proceeded to examine the town, distant about two miles from the river. This town is famous for the manufacture of pipe-bowls, which are sent to all parts of the east. The streets are merely narrow dirty passages. In the bazaars are a few well-stocked shops; those for the sale of pipe-bowls form the largest number. There was considerable bustle and appearance of business here, and a crowd of the natives gathered round our party, as some of our number were making purchases. The demand for "backshish" continued all the time, and miserable,

shrivelled-up old hags thrust out their palms for the expected gratuity.

About two miles from the town, on the side of a hill, are some caves and mummy-pits. The views of the town and country around from this spot are very fine. The vicinity of the pits is distinguishable by the immense number of skulls and bones that lay scattered about. I picked up a skull that must have been bleaching in the sun for a long period. It was as white as marble. Returning again towards the town, we diverged to the left a few hundred yards, to examine a very extensive Turkish cemetery, the largest I have seen in Egypt. Our Scotch friend contrived to lose his hat in one of the pits, and very nearly lost himself in trying to recover it. Not succeeding, he tied his pocket-handkerchief in its place, and a most comical figure he cut on his donkey, as he rode into the town. In his hurry to start by the steamer, he had neglected to provide himself with money. The agent, however, supplied him with some, and he purchased a fez cap, which he wore for the rest of the journey. Our guides conducted us, through a miserable suburb, to the house of some dancing women, but they were not at home, having been sent for to

entertain a party visiting the Governor. Having seen all the sights of Osioot, we returned to the steamer to dinner, well fatigued with our morning's ramble. The steamer proceeded onwards, and the next morning found us at anchor opposite to Thebes.

Ancient Thebes, like modern London, was built on both sides of the river; Thebes proper being on the western bank, and Luxor and Karnac on the eastern. It was decided that we should leave the ruins on the eastern bank, until our return from the cataract. The steamer would wait two days for that purpose, and thus divide the objects of interest, so thickly strewn on either side the great river, at this point of our voyage.

Early after breakfast on Monday morning, we went ashore. Here we found donkeys and guides in abundance. Our plans were to devote one day to the tombs of the kings, and the second day to the palaces and temples.

Our path lay through green fields; the barley was in full ear; the tobacco-plant, about a foot high; scattered groups of olive and palm-trees, looking beautifully green and fresh, were here and there distributed over the landscape. A few

of the natives, nearly in a state of nudity, were working in the fields ; their hands digging up the soft mud, which the inundation had rendered an easy task. I saw them use no implement of any kind. The crows and rooks were flying overhead, and their old familiar caw was welcome in this lonely, forsaken spot. A few mud hovels could barely be distinguished in the distance; but the blue waters of the Nile, as they flowed onward, could be seen for many a mile—an object of mystery, for who can tell from whence they come ? What a mystery to us are these vast ruins, which are scattered on the banks of this river for so many hundreds of miles ! Under the Pharaohs, Egypt must have been a great and prosperous country. Those wonderful monuments, the pyramids, were raised twenty centuries before the Christian dispensation. They have left us, in their temples, palaces, and tombs—their pyramids and obelisks, proofs of originality and grandeur unequalled. The architecture of this period has never been surpassed for vastness and imposing magnificence. During their dominion, Abraham, Joseph and his brethren, with their father Jacob, sojourned in the land ; and, in looking over these ruins of antiquity, with how much greater interest do we

examine them, when we recollect that they probably saw them too; not as we see them to-day, but in all their glory and magnificence.

Leaving the plain of Thebes on our left, we entered a deep defile in the mountains. A roadway of ancient construction was here very evident. Along this wide causeway the Pharaohs were carried to their sepulchres; it was the highway to the tombs of the kings. On our right we passed an immense statue, partly cut out of the side of the mountain, about forty feet high. The sun was intensely hot and glaring, like a furnace was the yellow sand under our feet. In about an hour we reached the tombs; they are all excavated out of the side of the mountain. The first we entered was that discovered by Belzoni. Descending two flights of steps, we arrived at a passage, the walls of which were entirely covered with beautifully executed sculptures and hieroglyphics, painted in colours of red, blue, green, and yellow, in a state of preservation quite wonderful. On applying a wet sponge, the colours were brought out so vividly, that it gave them the appearance of having only just been finished. At the end of the passage is a series of chambers nearly square, the walls

of which are covered entirely with paintings, in brilliant colours. The subject on each chamber is different. Thus, we have in the King's Chamber, a representation of the monarch, in large dimensions. Passing in review before him, is a procession of people of different nations. In another chamber are represented his officers and servants, employed in their various duties. In the King's Chamber is a large granite sarcophagus, beautifully polished, and covered with hieroglyphics. The ovals of the monarch are sculptured over the door-way. This is supposed to have been the tomb of Osirei. In several of the chambers are deep pits, in which the king's officers and servants were buried. The walls in these chambers were covered over with representations of every-day life among the domestics, in that remote period. Women were employed in various offices. Among the objects of interest, I noticed a beautifully executed representation of a crocodile, a boat and four men pulling it along by a cord, fish underneath the boat, swimming up the stream.

The next tomb we examined was Bruce's. We entered a large hall, containing a sarcophagus of granite, broken in two. On the walls in this

tomb were representations of people slaughtering sheep and oxen, cooking meat, and various culinary employments, not greatly different from those in use at the present day. The syphon is there, and agricultural implements in great variety. On either side of the grand passage are small chambers, in the centre of which is a mummy-pit. The hieroglyphics were not equal to those in Belzoni's tomb.

The next we entered is called the tomb of Memnon, containing very striking paintings of sphinxes, crocodiles, and black men, very spiritedly executed in fresco. An immense granite sarcophagus is in the King's Chamber, but broken, like the rest that I saw. We visited several other tombs, but none equal in interest to those already mentioned.

Leaving the valley of tombs, by a hot, dusty, and disagreeable path over the mountain, and descending on the other side, we again found ourselves in the plain of Thebes. At the foot of the mountain is the temple of Medeenet Haboo, the palace of Remeses the Third. Here we found refreshments brought from the steamer, consisting of cold fowl, mutton, and bottled porter—never more acceptable, after a fatiguing morn-

ing, spent in the confined atmosphere of the tombs.

The ruins of this temple are very extensive and interesting. In these courts the early Christians used to assemble for prayer. The walls were covered by them with mud, to hide the profane sculptures of the Pharaohs.

The large Egyptian columns, having bell-formed capitals, are very remarkable. The large area is surrounded by these magnificent columns; and in the centre are broken shafts, capitals, and architraves, of early Christian era, contrasting strangely with the massive proportions of the former, every square inch of which is covered with sculptured figures and hieroglyphics, cut into the stone some two inches in depth, and painted in colours of rich blue, vermilion, and green. The ceiling of the corridor is entirely covered in like manner: the walls also are covered with figures, of gigantic proportions. The largest figures are those of the monarch; some of these are thirty feet high. The battle scenes on the outside walls of this temple are very interesting: in one place he is pursuing the flying enemy; in another he is seen returning in triumph, with his prisoners walking behind his chariot.

My watch pointed to the dinner hour. The sun was setting like a globe of fire as I hastened on board, where the rest of the party had just arrived. Our Russian friends had been extensive purchasers of curiosities. Among the most interesting was a cartouche of Remeses the Second, in a good state of preservation, and a lady's hand, having a gold ring upon the first finger. A walk by moonlight along the banks of the river, in the cool of the evening, was very delightful.

The next morning we started at seven o'clock to the Memnonium Palace: it is on a grand scale. Noble, lofty columns, supporting an architrave of magnificent proportions, stand out against the blue sky, and so have stood, perhaps, for twenty-three centuries!

The Memnonium was built by Remeses the Great, whose reign commenced B.C. 1355. Not a fragment remains of the avenue of sphinxes. An immense mutilated statue of the king, in a sitting posture, is overturned near the colonnade of the large area. Some idea of its dimensions may be formed, when it is mentioned, that this solid block of red granite has been estimated to have weighed upwards of eight hundred tons, and to have been upwards of fifty feet in height! In

another court are four or five columns, in the human shape, of gigantic proportions, supporting a noble architrave. Near to this place is another statue of black granite, broken like the former; the sculptures on the walls are very elegant. Egyptian art had reached its highest point during this period. The two colossi of the plain are objects of celebrity, from the reputation one possesses of being the vocal Memnon. Every morning at sunrise a sound was heard proceeding from this statue—at least so the ancients believed. Priestcraft, however, was in a flourishing state in those days, as well as in modern times. The height of these colossi is about sixty feet: they are composed of large blocks of sandstone and granite.

We next proceeded to examine the temple palace at Old Koorneh. This temple was supposed to have been erected 3,100 years ago. The early style of its architecture is the chief object of interest. A few columns of the old Egyptian Oserite order are still standing, the shaft and capital of which resemble a water-lily. An old fragment of a stone staircase, much worn, lies half buried amongst the ruins. The roof is composed of immense blocks of stone, supported by a number of pillars standing very thickly together, giving this

portion of the temple a very crowded appearance. From this temple we proceeded to the tombs of Asseseef, distant about two miles. They are excavated, like all Egyptian catacombs, out of the solid rock, on the side of a hill. These tombs are supposed to have belonged to the priests and private individuals. Among the most remarkable paintings in these tombs, we noticed two figures employed in glass-blowing; women playing a musical instrument, something like the harp; curiously-shaped umbrellas; agricultural implements—the flail, the plough, the scythe, the hook, &c. One of these tombs is of an immense size, supposed to be that of a priest, covering nearly an acre and a quarter. There was a very disagreeable mummified smell in this place: the distance, in some parts, from the fresh air was, no doubt, one of the causes, and the number of candles burning also assisted to injure the atmosphere. Immense flocks of swallows were flying out of these chambers as we entered. My guide said there were 400,000 birds in this one tomb alone.

This tomb is supposed to be of the eighteenth dynasty, and is more ancient than the others of this name. Down two flights of stairs

you arrive at a long corridor and a mummy-pit: then down two more flights of stairs into another long passage, and another deep pit, very dangerous to pass, from the narrowness of the road. There are several large chambers, but the bad smell and the birds together made it disagreeable; so I only remained long enough to examine a broken sarcophagus in the last chamber.

In tomb No. 35, of Koornet Murrace, I noticed a fresco representing a procession of different nations bringing presents to the king.

In tomb No. 11 there are some beautiful sculptures, especially representing agricultural implements; it would be impossible to mention a tithe of the objects of interest in these tombs of private individuals. I visited as many as my time permitted; but several days would not enable a person to obtain more than a cursory knowledge of their contents. It is, in fact, a study of the manners and customs of the ancients pictorially exemplified at the time. Such are the catacombs of Thebes. There are others older in Egypt, but none more interesting.

The temple of Dayr El Medeeneh was the last event of the day. It is a small temple of the Ptolemy period; and, considering the comparatively

recent date of its erection, it is surprising so little remains. A rude brick wall runs round the outside, erected by the early Christians, who used the temple and its vicinity as a place of residence. There are some curious figures sculptured upon the walls, not remarkable for good taste, judged by Egyptian standard. Here our party met at one o'clock to lunch. It was a curious sight to see grouping round these antique pillars a motley company, devouring cold fowl, ham, &c., *al fresco;* nothing, however, can destroy an Englishman's appetite. Among our party I cannot omit this opportunity of describing one group, at least—the Madras merchant, a sort of Dombey in his way, only the firm in this instance was Dombey and *daughter*—although he had a son with him, a young man; but his affectionate attentions were all concentrated upon the daughter, a young lady about one or two and twenty. This Dombey was the nearest approach to Dickens's celebrated character that it is possible to be; he was a small man, about sixty years of age, very like in appearance to the old watchmen of former days, but very precisely dressed; he would speak to no one but his daughter. He dressed just as if he were in Pall Mall—every day in white kid gloves

and patent leather boots; he had two coloured servants on board, an ugly old woman who attended upon his "daughter," and a man who attended upon himself. Imagine this dandy and his daughter, dressed as if for the Park, sitting upon a fallen column in the temple of Dayr El Medeeneh, his two little pints of red and white wine—his napkins, his precise politeness to every one, when necessity required. No person will, however, a second time be found attempting the polite to the daughter; not but that it may be agreeable enough to her, but Dombey growls out his displeasure instantly. One of the party offered to assist the young lady, one day, up a very steep path—"She can get up, sir, without your assistance," was the Dombey's reply; and the poor fellow slunk away, quite ashamed of offering to do a kindness. The son was a quiet, dried-up, old-before-his-time kind of fellow, having somewhat the resemblance of a walking mummy, and not a respectable-looking one either. He never left the steamer but once during the entire voyage, yet, no doubt, when he returns to Madras, he will talk quite knowingly of Egyptian antiquities. This temple was the last object of interest I saw in Thebes.

CHAPTER V.

The Nile, and Upper Egypt.

We left Thebes at seven o'clock on Wednesday morning, and reached Esne early on Friday. Esne has a very beautiful Ptolemy temple: the portico is the only portion at present excavated; it is the first building I have yet seen in Egypt with the roof in a good state of preservation, which adds much to the interest. The style of architecture is grand and imposing—the sculptures are spiritedly executed, and in excellent preservation; the mud hovels of the inhabitants, built on heaps of rubbish, cover the other portions of the building.

Mehemet Ali, during his visit to Esne, caused the portico to be excavated, and the hovels that covered it to be removed. The Nile, when at its highest elevation, inundates the building two or three feet or more; this fact proves that the bed of the river must have risen considerably since the period of the erection of this temple. The size of the portico is 120 feet by 60.

Esne is celebrated as the residence of the Egyptian dancing women, or almehs. It is anything but a graceful exhibition—in fact, it cannot be called a dance at all, but a series of postures, rendered remarkable from the uncommon flexibility of the spine, which is acquired by long practice at an early age. This flexibility is wonderful ; they can move the body in a rapid rotary motion whilst standing perfectly still. It was a curious, if not an interesting exhibition. They were dressed in large white calico trousers, tight-fitting jackets of red or blue velvet, without shoes or stockings, and gauze pink or green scarfs, a shawl of showy colours round the head. A considerable quantity of tinsel is worn on the arms, which are otherwise bare : they are very fine figures, with the Grecian cast of countenance, and black, expressive eyes. The music consisted of two instruments something in appearance like a violin, though played like the violoncello ; they have but two strings, which are tuned in fourths.

Thirty miles beyond Esne we came to Edfoo, and went on shore to examine another Ptolemy temple, which, like the last, was covered over with rubbish and mud huts. The towers are well preserved, and are sculptured over with gigantic

figures. From the summit of the towers there is a most extensive view of the valley of the Nile, which now becomes contracted.

The inhabitants appear somewhat darker in colour. This will be more perceptible as we approach the tropics. From the elevated spot on the tower I was enabled to look over the dwellings of the inhabitants, and was much amused in watching a company of women and children at their toilet. One old woman, having made a pomatum, something like paste-blacking, in a large stone mortar, commenced anointing first her own hair, and then the other members of the family, who sat round the vessel. The operation appeared to give great delight to the younger ones, and when the contents were all used up, they ran off, to captivate sundry Nubian gentlemen, who were waiting for them round the corner. Continuing our voyage, we reached, the same day, twenty-two miles further, Silsilis. Here are the quarries from whence most of the temples in Upper Egypt were supplied with materials. The stone quarries are of great extent, and the size of some of the blocks is immense. Herodotus mentions that it took 2,000 men three years to remove, by land, one of the blocks. At

Ombas is another Ptolemy temple, with the two-winged globe over the entrance, forcibly calling to mind the denunciation of Scripture, "Woe to the land overshadowed with wings;" and "woe," indeed, it has proved, as witness the magnificent ruins scattered for a thousand miles on the banks of this great river. The ruins of Ombas are very picturesque, standing on the brow of a hill, at an angle of the river overlooking the valley. Forty miles further is Asouan. Here the steamer remained whilst we proceeded upon donkeys six miles further, to the celebrated island of Philœ. This was the most southern point of our journey. Philœ is just beyond the cataracts, and within a few miles of the tropics. The ruins here are the most picturesque in Egypt. The temple is of the Ptolemy era. The ruins are very extensive. The architecture of this period is not to be compared to the early Egyptian for grandeur of effect. There are two propylæ, tolerably perfect, and numerous columns. The scenery is very wild and beautiful. The temple of Isis stands on the brow of a hill, about 100 feet above the river; it occupies the entire of the island. The views are not extensive, in consequence of the high hills which surround the island. The

shape of the rocks on all sides is remarkable, so unlike what is seen elsewhere. We spent a whole day wandering amongst the ruins, and returned late in the evening to Asouan, intending to have gone down the cataract in a small boat, which we had engaged for that purpose; but the wind became violent, and we found it impracticable.

The next day we visited the granite quarries at Asouan. Here there is an immense obelisk, nearly finished, but left in consequence of a fracture. The island of Elephantine, close to Asouan, is a stupid place, not worth the trouble of visiting. It took us two hours, in an old tub of a boat, rowed by three men and a boy, to reach it. The heat was oppressive. We saw nothing but a few crude brick arches, broken pottery, and some curiously-shaped rocks. We had a ride by moonlight, on donkeys, through the town of Asouan, a wretched place, and returned to the steamer late. The next morning our course lay down the river. We started at 7, A.M., and reached Luxor, a distance of 120 miles, by 5, P.M.

Luxor lies close to the river; it is a small town, containing a few thousand inhabitants.

The climate in winter is most delightful, and it is a favourite spot for the boats of invalids to anchor during that period. There is no accommodation in the town for Europeans, but a house is being built for their reception, by an enterprising Mahommedan, with the intention of letting it as lodgings.

Luxor is the "populous No" of sacred Scripture. The temple—what little there is of it left standing—has been adapted by the inhabitants for their residences, and is, therefore, a rather difficult—not to say dangerous—object of interest to the very curious explorer of antiquities. The industrious fleas are in great strength amongst the old pillars, wherever they are enclosed for the convenience of the proprietor. Pigeons and donkeys have a share in these arrangements. It is amazing what a quantity of pigeons are kept in all Egyptian villages. Our friend the Scotchman used to shoot at them on all occasions, but never killed one, owing, he said, to the shot not being large enough!

Every one has seen the celebrated obelisk in the Place de la Concorde at Paris. Its companion is still erect at the entrance of the temple at Luxor. The enormous expense attending a

removal has, no doubt, contributed to keep this in its place.

The great temple at Karnac is unquestionably the most extensive ruin in the world. An ancient writer remarks, that in his day this temple measured thirteen stadia, equal to an English mile and half. For upwards of ten centuries successive Pharaohs extended and adorned it. The oldest remains are contemporaneous with the reign of Osertersen, the Pharaoh on the throne when Joseph arrived in Egypt.

Beginning with the avenues of sphinxes, of which there were two, if not three, one of which must have been nearly two miles in length, we reach the towers, which introduce us into an immense area nearly three hundred feet square. Down the centre stood a colonnade, of which only one pillar remains standing. Through another tower and pylon the grand hall is reached, having a central avenue of pillars nearly eighty feet high, and about twelve feet in diameter. An immense number of smaller pillars, arranged on either side of the hall, formerly supported a stone roof. The effect of light and shade amongst these magnificent pillars was beautiful. This is by far the most imposing portion of the temple.

The columns and walls are entirely covered with sculptures. Beyond this hall are the ruins of obelisks, pillars, and capitals, in magnificent confusion; and a little further on is standing a handsome obelisk, of granite, ninety-two feet high, and sculptured over with hieroglyphics two inches in depth. A small building of red granite at the end of the grand hall was the sanctuary; and beyond this are some fragments of columns, of the reign of Osertersen. At the extreme end is another small columnar building.

Our two days' stay at Luxor enabled some of our party to add to their stock of antiquities; so that when we started down the river, the deck of the steamer and the cabin were covered with skulls, mummies, and fragments of sculptures, enough to set up a museum. By the time, however, that we reached Cairo, one-half had been thrown overboard, and the rest stowed away into carpet-bags, portmanteaus, and baskets.

We remained a few hours the next day at Dendera, to view the temple, which is in an excellent state of preservation, having a complete roof, and covered with frescoes. This temple was built by one of the Ptolemies, about eighteen hundred years ago. The columns are exceed-

ingly beautiful : the dark chambers of the priests are crowded with hieroglyphics : the style of the capitals is remarkable. This temple was dedicated to Athor. On the walls are the names of Cleopatra, Tiberius, Caligula, and Nero.

The next day brought us opposite the grottos of Beni Hassan ; they are excavated out of the rock on the side of a hill some two hundred feet above the river, and extend about a mile parallel to the Nile. In point of antiquity, these tombs rank before those at Thebes : they are covered with fresco paintings ; and amongst the most interesting is a procession, which some writers have supposed to represent Joseph and his brethren.

In another tomb are represented men wrestling ; others employed in various ways : some are glass-blowing ; and various trades are represented—as goldsmiths, painters, sculptors. The polygonal column is very general throughout. These paintings are very interesting, representing as they do the manners and customs of a race of people in existence 3,600 years ago.

Memphis, within a few miles of Cairo, was the last place of interest at which we stopped. There is very little left of this once famous place ; a

colossus of Rameses the Second is the only thing of note. This statue was given by the discoverers, Signior Caviglia and Mr. Sloane, says Wilkinson, to the British Museum, "on condition of its being taken to England; but the fear of the expense seems to have hitherto prevented its removal." It is broken at the feet, and is about forty feet in length.

The mounds of Memphis are very extensive. One hour's ride in the direction of the Libyan Desert are the mummy-pits and several pyramids; but the trouble will scarcely be repaid, as there is nothing but scattered bones in the former, and the pyramids are greatly inferior in size and interest to those at Geezeh.

Memphis is the "Noph" of Scripture, and was, probably, the residence of the Pharaoh in Joseph's time. The ruins were very extensive formerly, but their vicinity to Cairo has, doubtless, been the cause why so little remains at the present day. Two-thirds of the mosques at Cairo have been built from the debris of Memphis.

We reached Cairo at seven o'clock on Saturday evening, having been absent eighteen days, much pleased with the excursion.

The river Nile, during its course from the sea

to the first cataract, is wide, and generally shallow, except during the inundation: the banks are low, and but little vegetation is seen from the steamer. Palm-trees are chiefly cultivated: each tree pays a tax to the Pacha. Wherever the waters of the Nile inundate, that portion of the plain is very fertile. Rice, cotton, tobacco, corn, castor-oil plant, sugar-cane, and dates, are successfully cultivated. The Pacha has several sugar manufactories along the banks; they are under the superintendence of Europeans. The article is very superior, and much resembles the produce of our own refineries in England. Cotton is a recent introduction, and the quality is improving every year. The quality and depth of soil along the banks is surprising: I have seen nothing equal to it anywhere, except in America. There is but little traffic upon the river at this season of the year. During the high Nile most of the vegetable productions are floated down to Cairo and Alexandria, either on rafts or large barges. The river was every day becoming lower, and we had, on three or four occasions, much difficulty in getting off the sand-banks, although the steamer drew but three feet of water. On one occasion we were six hours

upon a bank, and were only released by the captain going ashore, and bringing the entire male population of a neighbouring village to our assistance : their service is compulsory and gratuitous, as the steamer belongs to the Pacha.

As a matter of course, we were all upon the look-out for crocodiles as soon as we reached that point of the river below which they are never seen. Our first interview with leviathan was rather startling. Imagine a small sand-hill, just out of the water, beginning to move !—such it appeared to us ; and if the monster had not stirred, I should have considered that what I had seen was a sand-hill, and nothing more : in size, colour, and shape, it exactly resembled it ! The creature was asleep. Our steamer awoke him, and he quietly walked into the river, beneath which he plunged, "making the deep to boil like a pot."

We saw several others, but none equal in size to this.

CHAPTER VI.

The Desert.

I STAYED but a few days in Cairo after my return, and my time was occupied in making arrangements with a dragoman for crossing the short Desert. As I wished to travel alone, it was with some difficulty that a dragoman could be induced to conduct me. The usual plan is for two persons or more to engage the dragoman at a fixed sum per day, he finding everything; of course the larger his party the greater would be his profits. I succeeded in obtaining a Syrian dragoman to provide me with camels, horses, and everything. The engagement was for forty days.

I started on Thursday afternoon, March 18, with six camels and four Arabs, a cook, and Abdallah, the dragoman. We reached Heliopolis in three hours, and encamped for the night in the neighbourhood of the village. Heliopolis is the On and Aven of Scripture, in the land of

Goshen. Joseph married a daughter of the high priest of this place. Ezekiel prophecies, "The young men of Aven and Pi-beséth shall fall by the sword, and these cities shall go into captivity." This was fulfilled fifty years after, when Cambyses conquered Egypt.

An obelisk, of the reign of Osertersen, is the only monument of the former greatness of Heliopolis now left. The celebrated "balm of Gilead" formerly grew in the gardens near this city. It was brought from Judea by Cleopatra, but was afterwards removed to Arabia, and is now imported into Europe, from Arabia, under the name of the balsam of Mecca. Mehemet Ali first cultivated the cotton plant in this neighbourhood, which now flourishes nearly all over Egypt, and is an important article in the revenues of the country. On the road we passed the town palace of the Pacha—an immense, gaudily-painted, ugly-looking building. The telegraph towers are conspicuous objects upon the sand-hills. There is an uninterrupted line of communication from Alexandria to Cairo and Suez. On the plain of Heliopolis, which is now partially covered with grain, in full ear, the Mamelukes made their last stand, in 1517, against the vic-

torious Turks. My first dinner in the tent was a novelty. The night was dark and cloudy. I cannot say that I slept much. The wind shook the tent; the village dogs, and monotonous singing of the Arabs bivouaced by the side of their camels, together with the novelty of my position, proved superior to the powers of sleep.

Friday.—Abdallah came at half-past five, with a small tin wash-hand basin and about three pints of water. Toilet soon over; then breakfast, and off at half-past seven. Stopped for the night, at six o'clock, at Balbays, a small village. Our route all day lay along the edge of the Desert. Pitched the tent in a small enclosure, just outside the village. A long and fatiguing day's ride: the motion of the camel very tiring. Balbays is 40 miles from Cairo.

Saturday.—On camel from 6, A.M., till 4, P.M.: our course, N.N.E. Leaving the land of Goshen on our left, we struck into the Desert. Travelled this day about thirty miles. Saw a mirage. Very difficult to believe that one does not actually see water, the deception so perfect. Looking behind, I saw the same appearance over the exact spot we had just travelled, about two miles off;

this was conclusive, as we had seen no water. The appearance of the Desert to-day was very lovely. Clumps of shrubs, separated from each other by naturally-formed wide gravel walks, gave it the appearance of an ornamental pleasure-ground. The air was deliciously cool and pleasant, as the sun went down. Whilst the camels were being unloaded, and the tents prepared, I took a delightful solitary walk. The Desert appeared one magnificent plain, covered with beautiful sand mounds, of rich amber colour, in the golden sunbeams ; low creeping plants, just becoming green, with here and there a few simple little flowers, served to relieve the scene of its otherwise sombre appearance. The evening star appeared as the day declined ; then one by one others came out of the blue expanse, until the heavens were studded over with them, and night reigned supreme. The camels had strayed, in search of food, some distance from the tents, the only moving objects to be seen ; but the camp-fire, which now shone out vividly, was to them as to myself, the beacon to guide us on our return to the friendly voice of man. Dinner about eight o'clock, and then to rest.

March 21.—Commenced the day's march at

half-past six, and continued, without halting, until six in the evening. We met a solitary Arab. What could he be doing alone in the Desert? Towards evening the Desert became undulating, but still covered, as yesterday, with green mounds. We passed the ancient bed of the canal, near to the salt lakes. This canal formerly brought the waters of the Nile down to the Red Sea. It must be near this spot that several cities stood in ancient times. Passed the mounds of an old town. Not far from this canal stood Daphne, the Tehaphnehes of the Bible, mentioned in Ezekiel, xxx. 18. Here Jeremiah resided, and prophesied against Egypt (Jeremiah, xliii. 8). Ezekiel also prophesied against this city. Throughout Ezekiel, the prophesies uttered against Egypt were most remarkably fulfilled by the Persian conqueror, fifty years after. About twenty miles to the north stood Pelusium, the "Sin" mentioned in Scripture, called by Ezekiel "the strength of Egypt." At Tehaphnehes Pharaoh had a palace, and some persons think this was the place of his residence when Moses called forth the plagues. If so, it must have been the starting point for the chariots and horsemen that pursued after the

children of Israel. The distance to the Red Sea is about two days' journey. This supposition is by no means improbable. A canal like this must have been the highway across the Desert, and the ruins of numerous towns prove that vegetation once existed where now nothing but the desert shrub is seen.

The waters of the Nile, during the high inundation, reach as far as the bed of the salt lakes, every year. Here we filled our water-casks, and bade farewell to the sweet waters of the Nile, which we shall see no more.

March 22.—Started at seven o'clock, and continued our route until nearly six. The morning was very cold. Passed a clump of palm-trees. The Desert to-day became more undulating, and large sand-hills appeared to the north. A very great wind at night. I expected every moment to have the tent blown over, and a scramble after my wardrobe in the Desert; it would have been a very comical exhibition by moonlight. This has been a very fatiguing day; never off the camel the whole time: distance performed, about thirty-five miles. If I am tired, what must the Arabs be, who always walk? Arabs' food—lentils and coarse cakes, with camel's cheese;

my cuisine—soup, mutton, fowl, omelets, coffee, tea, eggs, and good bread! What a dreamy existence all this is, in comparison with the bustle and excitement of this "working-day world" in England. Sailing along, on the top of a camel, what a strong contrast to the railways!—while I am journeying on my thirty miles a-day, the train has gone from London to Edinburgh. It will take me eighteen days to go that distance!

Yet the change is pleasant. It seems as if one had stepped for a moment aside into a quiet nook, while the stream of life is hurrying on. What a world of excitement it seems, when quietly reviewed in the lonely desert. Scarcely stopping to take breath, but hurrying on, the world seems, viewed from this, at a veritable railroad speed, indeed! In the morning the sun is before me, gilding the tops of the little sand-hills, and showing, for many a long hour to come, the way I must go. Towards noon he is burning my right ear; and Abdallah sends me "something," by the hands of an Arab: perhaps the wings of a chicken, with hard-boiled eggs, oranges (how welcome in the Desert!) and figs, which I eat as I go along. Hot!—hot!—over-

head : the sand below dazzling, though my green veil is some relief. The heavens "are as brass :" towards four o'clock it becomes cool—a breeze springs up ; the sun is sending my shadow before me, and I know exactly the size and distance it must acquire before the halting time arrives. We pass every day great quantities of bleached camels' bones. These animals frequently die in the Desert for want of water, and are left there to the birds of prey. The camels feed as they go along, snatching their food from the green shrubs under their feet. The wild flowers are becoming more plentiful—one resembles a white convolvulus ; there is another simple little blue flower, which I long to get off and gather. What a happy season is spring-time in country places in England. Now the banks are beginning to look gay ; the walks at this period of the year, how beautiful, when everything seems full of hope. It is like the spring-time of youth. How the memory loves to go back to that happy period, when rambling along through green lanes, after school hours, or on half-days holidays. How impressive those rambles ! Windy days are frequent in spring. They are among many of my happiest recollections of that season. I can see

the boughs of the old pear-tree in the garden, just close to my bed-room window, bending beneath the blast that sweeps across the meadow. It seems but as yesterday since those long Saturday afternoons spent in the green fields at spring-time. Oh, youth, youth, make the most of spring—it will never return. Thus musing on—

> "The soul forgets her schemes of hope and pride,
> And flies unconscious o'er each backward year."

An old newspaper, though new to me, is found in my coat-pocket; how it has escaped being read I know not—fortunately so, its contents are all new, and dreadfully exciting. How one devours its contents in the Desert—advertisements of mock auctions—all are read with avidity. Then a pile of old letters become wonderfully interesting and suggestive—re-read, perhaps for the twentieth time, yet never read in vain. A page of a letter that would not, in general, have demanded five minutes of one's thoughts, has been food for half a-day in the Desert: a sentence is read—a most commonplace one—yet it sends off the thoughts far, far away. Having thoroughly worn it out, you read another, and another; and thus the days wear away, and night comes, and the camels knee

down ; their loads are removed—the tent is raised —the cook lights his fire and prepares his saucepans, and you return, after a short ramble, from some neighbouring height, where you have beheld a gorgeous sunset, and you hasten back, for there is very little twilight in these latitudes. How great is the loneliness of the Desert, far more so than I could have imagined. But, hark ! dinner is ready, and it is always welcome in the Desert : Vermicelli soup, roast chicken, green peas from Cairo ! pancakes, mish-mish (stewed apricots), and an omelet, finished by the tchbook and coffee ; the tchbook is a long pipe with a small bowl filled with most fragrant tobacco—then for my little camp-bedstead. How welcome, and how sound and refreshing is the sleep after a twelve hours' ride or sail on the ship of the Desert.

Tuesday, March 23rd.—Off at seven : a very stormy and disagreeable day ; the wind blew the sand into a cloud so dense that we lost our track for two hours. Towards evening the wind moderated, and we encamped, at half-past five, in a hollow near to some solitary palm-trees. The Desert to-day has been more like my previous conceptions of it —long valleys of sand, and high sand-hills, without any vegetation whatever—our path due north-

east, never turning to the right hand or to the left, no matter how rough the path : evening, pure and calm. The Arabs are very merry to-night; they expect in two more days to reach El Arish, their native place. In the winter they are obliged to go down to Egypt with their camels, the Desert of Syria and the neighbourhood of El Arish not affording sufficient food for their camels at that season. In the spring they return, generally conducting parties across the Desert going to Palestine; but, independently of European travellers, the Coptic Christians, to the number of three or four hundred, go to the feast at Jerusalem; and thus the poor Arabs make it their harvest. Very probably, the money they receive at this season is all they obtain for a twelvemonth. Their wants, however, are very few; a little tobacco is almost the only "article" they purchase. This was a lovely starlight night. I took a solitary walk, as usual—Venus just setting. The camels were feeding on the scattered vegetation around the tent; the Arabs at their evening meal round their campfire; they have no tent, and always bivouac round the fire, in the open air. Abdallah and the cook busy again with their saucepans; dinner, and to bed.

March 24.—Travelling from seven till five; a very hot day up to two o'clock; afterwards a pleasant breeze. To-day we came in view of the sea, a most welcome sight; the Desert again covered with shrubs and ornamental sand-hills. Passed a grove of palm-trees; my old friends, the rooks, again. Thrice welcome is their old familiar caw, carrying one back to village greens, and old village churches, and sending one on our road, musing for half a day on scenes far, far away in other lands, and other companions. How different from wild Arabs and the Desert! I noticed a flower to-day resembling an Indian corn cob. It bore a yellow, or rather cluster of yellow flowers, and came straight up out of the sand, about a foot high. A simple note of a bird heard to-day, so wild and melancholy; in general, but few birds or animals are seen or heard in the Desert.

At five, P.M., we halted for the night, and I was surprised to come upon a party in their tent, who had left Cairo a day before us. They were the four Russian gentlemen with whom I had travelled in Upper Egypt, in the steamer. We pitched our tent close to theirs, and I spent a pleasant evening with them. Our road lay to-

day, for several hours, along the dry bed of a winter torrent—no doubt, a branch of one of the "rivers of Egypt" mentioned in the Bible. Found a tortoise under a small shrub. There are a great many, Abdallah says, in the neighbourhood of the sea. Red poppies begin to appear, and many other flowers. Long ridges of sand, some thirty feet high, which the late high winds have left perfectly smooth, are here and there covered with various kinds of flowering shrubs.

I had a long conversation to-day with Abdallah about Syria (he is from Beyroot); he says, most gentlemen prefer the long Desert. There is no sand there, nothing but rocks and mountains.

March 25.—Off at sunrise. The sensations of early rising are very delightful. I ascended a hill, whilst Abdallah was removing the tents, to watch for the first appearance of the sun. It is a noble sight! On my return, the tent is down, the camels loaded, and all ready for starting. This is always an exciting and interesting period of the day, full of hope and anticipation. Left the Russians behind, asleep. The wind commenced blowing at four o'clock, A.M., and continued all day; at two, P.M., accompanied by heavy rain; nearly wet through, the bedding

also wet. A very disagreeable day; the most so yet: Desert very dreary. At night we reached El Arish, and a more gloomy, lonely spot cannot be imagined. After two hours of fatiguing travel over barren sand-hills, towards sunset we came in sight of the castle. Here the Pacha of Egypt keeps some troops to overawe the Arabs. We passed several large flocks of goats and sheep in the neighbourhood of the village. El Arish is the dividing boundary between Syria and Egypt; also, between Asia and Africa. The people flocked to see us: our Arabs found many to welcome them. One old man fondled a little child very affectionately; the men kiss one another five or six times; first, the forehead, then each cheek, and then touch each other on the chest. This ceremony over, they part again, without any interchange of conversation. Very droll, according to our notions of welcoming a friend!

El Arish, pronounced Larish, is a strong fortress, with a few miserable huts round the outside walls. The inhabitants are all Arabs of the Desert, and very poor. We encamped for the night in an enclosure of mud walls, just under the fortress; not half so pleasant a place as in the Desert.

The Russian party did not arrive until nearly eight o'clock. The officer came in the evening for our passports. We gave them to him, but he returned shortly after, and said they were not signed at Cairo. Abdallah was very angry with him, and ordered him out of the place.

March 26.—This morning no passports returned; very annoying, as it prevents us from starting early.

I sent Abdallah to the fortress to demand them, and he returned very sulkily, and said it was necessary I should go and have an interview with the Governor, as the passports were refused. Proceeding along a narrow, dirty path, between two mud walls, I came to the gateway of the castle, and was shown up an old rickety staircase into a divan, where the Governor, an old Mussulman, was seated, cross-legged, upon the ottoman, with an officer on each side, and a number of Arabs squatted on the floor. After a salam, a chair was brought for me, and then pipes and coffee were introduced. One of the officers present was a European—the person whom Abdallagh had the altercation with the evening before. After a brief interval of silence, during which I continued to smoke with all the apparent indifference I could muster, this individual, at a

signal from the Governor, commenced the proceedings, by informing his Excellency that the party then before him had arrived from Cairo without the Government signature to their passport. The Governor, through the interpreter, inquired why we had not conformed to the custom of the country in this respect; and we replied that the English consul had signed them, pointing, at the same time, to the signature.

The old Governor consulted with his officers for a minute or two, and then informed me that he was sorry his duty required that he should detain me until the return of the passports, duly signed; that he would instantly forward them by an Arab on a dromedary, who would be absent only six or seven days, but that the expense would have to be paid for by me!

So then here was the consequence of quarrelling with an avaricious European. Had Abdallagh kept a civil tongue in his head, and quietly slipped a dollar into his palm last evening, all would have been well. However, to think of staying here for six or seven days was quite out of the question; and as to paying heavily for Abdallah's intemperance, I was determined not to do so. So laying down my tchbook, I commenced a very energetic harangue, and pointing

to the signature of our consul, told him to stop us at his peril, and rather than stay there, I would return to Cairo, and complain of the detention to the Pacha. Another consultation ensued. In the meantime I produced my notebook, and pretended to be writing down their remarks, which the Governor did not appear to relish.



After a short delay, I was told by the European that the Governor did not know anything of us, or of European manners and customs, but

was willing to take his security for us, and let us pass. To this I replied, "Very well;" but this was not "very well:" so after another consultation, a paper was produced, in Arabic, purporting to come from the principal officer at Alexandria, ordering that no one be allowed to proceed to Syria, unless with a properly signed passport. I demanded a printed copy, which was produced; it was in French, but contained not one word about the necessity of having the signature of the Government. After another long talk, the Governor agreed to permit us to continue our journey, on our signing our names to a paper, drawn up to the effect that our consul's signature was sufficient. The Russians were with me in this, as their passports, like mine, had only the signature of their consul.

Left the Governor, and proceeded to load the camels. In an hour afterwards I returned for the passports. Mine was given, and I was told I was at liberty, but that my servant must be detained, as he was not a British subject, and had no signature to his passport. Here was an unexpected blow—to go on without him was simply impossible. I therefore had another interview, and made a long and energetic speech,

not one word of which, of course, he could understand. I finished by returning my passport, and told him, that to detain my dragoman was to detain me, and that he did it at his own risk and peril, for that the English Government would, on hearing of it, come and blow him and his castle into the air, the sea, or the Desert, whichever he preferred.

During this interview, the Governor, with a cloth round his neck, was having his head shaved, so he had an uninterrupted view of my energetic demonstrations, which appeared to produce the desired effect, for he took the dragoman's passport out of the hand of the rascally European officer, and presented it to me, and with a low bow I took my leave. I would not give them a farthing. The European cringingly followed us, and said it was all the "Governor's doings." The Governor said it was only the instructions of Artin Bey, at Alexandria, that he was following. Thus were these people trying to remove the responsibility of the detention from off each others' shoulders. We at last got off, at one, P.M. Our road lay over small sand-hills. We continued our journey, travelling by moonlight, until nearly eight o'clock. I walked some miles in the even-

ing behind the camels; heard the roaring of the sea, which was about four miles distant, on our left. We encamped for the night in an undulating plain, about three miles from the sea, and thirty-five from Gaza, having travelled some twenty miles from El Arish. It was a beautiful moonlight night. The Russian party, not having been detained, reached their encamping-ground an hour before us. Great was the cheering when they saw me arrive; for when they started, the Governor had just come to the decision of detaining Abdallah.

March 27.—This was a long day's journey, from 7, A.M., till 7, P.M. Twelve consecutive hours on a camel is very severe work, but it was important to reach Gaza that night, as a day would be thus saved in quarantine, which commences four hours on this side of Gaza, and if we reach that spot before sunset, the day counts as one in the quarantine of five days. Towards two o'clock, on the skirts of the Desert, the first Syrian village appeared. From this to Gaza the road is over a common. Fig-trees, and hedges of the cactus, just coming into blossom, surround the gardens of the villagers. Here the quarantine officer took charge of us, and accompanied

us to Gaza. The day has been dreadfully hot. In the afternoon one of our camels was unable to proceed any further, and had to be left behind. We heard the wolves howling in the neighbourhood at night. We were all quite tired down when we reached Gaza, shortly after seven. The Russian party arrived at the same time. Here we found a party just come in before us, who left Cairo three days in advance.

IN QUARANTINE.

Quarantine has been well described as a prison, with the chance of catching the plague. Shut up in a court, surrounded by high walls, having a deep well in the centre, and small, damp, dark cells all round, about twelve feet square; a guardian, with a long stick to attend your movements, and to warn off all intruders. Such is quarantine life.

Wednesday Morning, March 31.—Once more in motion. The town of Gaza is dirty and uninteresting. The country, however, around, is pretty. Hedges of the cactus, enclosing orchards of olive and fig-trees, form a pleasing variety and contrast after the Desert. About half a

mile to the east is the hill where Samson carried the gates of the city. The wild flowers are just coming into blossom. The scarlet anemonies, convolvuluses, and forget-me-nots, are in great abundance. We are now in the land of the Philistines. The soil is very rich; in fact, the plain, extending for some miles to the north, is one of the richest in the country. The wheat is about a foot high; and ploughing is going on in the fields. The Syrian plough is a small implement, guided by one hand, and drawn by a yoke of small oxen; it is so light that the labourer takes it home every evening, on the back of a donkey. They plough very shallow. The Syrian men wear long beards, thus differing materially from the Egyptians, who wear none at all. We stopped for the night at half-past five, about four hours from Ramleh, and encamped in an orchard of fig-trees, near to a village, called Yebna. The natives came with milk, eggs, and poultry. The camels bivouaced round the tent for the last time; to-morrow we exchange them for mules and horses. I shall be sorry to part with the Arabs. They have been very civil and well-behaved; also honest—three great qualities in the Desert. We saw a range of mountains this

afternoon, which are within three hours of Jerusalem.

Thursday, April 1.—Off at seven, reached Ramleh, the ancient Arimathea, at ten. At this place we took leave of our camels, the country to Jerusalem being too hilly to continue them with convenience. It was necessary to pitch the tent, as the whole day would be occupied in procuring horses to continue our route. Outside the town is the Turkish cemetery, in a field enamelled with flowers and wild herbs. The day was a religious one with the Mahommedans, who came out of the town in great numbers, gaily dressed, to perform religious ceremonies over the graves of their deceased friends—a wild, uncouth performance, in which one led a monotonous chant, afterwards taken up by the bystanders, every one moving his body backward and forward at each note, and increasing the pace rapidly towards the end, until the perspiration rolled off them. After considerable difficulty, Abdallah succeeded in obtaining the requisite number of horses, and we started at five, P.M. Six miles from Ramleh the mountains of Judea commence, and continue all the way to Jerusalem. We proceeded very slowly to the

foot of the mountains. It was our intention to travel for some hours in the cool of the evening, by moonlight. Jaffa is about three hours' distance from Ramleh, but the sea is not visible from the latter place. Shortly after nine, P.M., the ascent commenced. The road, or rather path, was wild in the extreme, through a mountain gorge, till past twelve. The effect by moonlight was solemn and grand. The peculiarity of the hills, with regular steps or terraces, where the grey stone peeps out from beneath the green herbage, was very striking, giving them the appearance of a city in ruins, emblematic of lost, forsaken, desolate Palestine.

Along this wild, rugged road, the cedars of Lebanon were carried, some 2,800 years ago, to build the temple; and for eighteen centuries pilgrims, from all corners of the world, have annually, at this season, trodden the same path: yet the way is so rough and uneven, that one would suppose no one but the neighbouring shepherds, with their wild flocks, could ever have used it. We passed one or two villages, "set on a hill," the vicinity to which is usually known by the barking of dogs. The dogs are a perfect nuisance all over Syria, and to a European especially so,

as they commence barking the moment of his appearance, and continue until he is fairly outside the town or village. An hour after midnight we pitched the tent, for the last time before reaching Jerusalem.

Friday, April 2.—Early this morning I was awoke by a cavalcade of pilgrims, from Jaffa, which place they had reached the day before, from Constantinople. They belong to the Greek Church—about 150 in number, of all ages; some on donkeys, others on mules, and a few on camels. It was very interesting to watch them, from my tent, winding round the hills. They appeared very much fatigued, having been travelling all night.

Soon after seven o'clock we commenced to load the mules. My impatience to reach Jerusalem, only three or four hours distant, was such, that I left them to follow, and with Abdallah proceeded, at a brisk trot, over the broken path. A little before eleven o'clock the walls of Jerusalem came in sight, and in a few minutes after we were waiting at the Jaffa gate of the Holy City.

CHAPTER VII.

Jerusalem.

THOSE beautiful descriptions in the Bible of Jerusalem as a city, and of the surrounding country, which we read of from our earliest infancy, as well as those sweet hymns which are committed to memory at that early period, all tend to picture a scene of interest in the mind's eye, which the reality, alas, can never satisfy. Reader, if you wish to preserve these visions of the Holy Land, do not come to Palestine; set not your foot in Jerusalem: let it still be with you "the fair and the beautiful," the land "flowing with milk and honey," "whose stones are iron, and out of whose hills thou mayest dig brass:" the reality is a "mockery, a snare, and a delusion;" the whole country bears upon it unmistakable signs of a curse. Geologically speaking, we would pronounce it impossible the hills round about Jerusalem ever could be productive. It seems absurd to suppose for one moment, that

Palestine could ever have supported a population of 5,000,000: the world, perhaps, cannot show a more complete "*natural*" impossibility. Land left neglected, century after century, may have become barren; but I know of no natural causes which will remove the soil, and leave the bare naked rocks, with only here and there a patch of soil capable of cultivation. Other causes than natural ones must have been employed, to change the land of Canaan into its present fearful condition.

The descriptions which nearly all modern writers have given to the world of Palestine and Jerusalem, can only be explained upon the principle that enthusiasm must have possessed the writers; the facts are unmistakably against them. Without the slightest suspicion of the real state of things, I was prepared for very different results; and it is not without calm and deliberate reflection that I have come to the firm conviction, that this country is one of great disappointment in every point of view. I can believe all that the Bible says of it; but a study of the country on the spot offers no assistance to this belief, but rather the contrary.

I found the principal hotel full, and was obliged to put up at a very inferior one kept by a German,

in the Via Dolorosa. The ground-floor was a carpenter's shop, the landlord being a carpenter. Behind the shop was an open court, and a stone staircase led up to the "hotel," consisting of a sitting-room, and five or six bed-chambers, miserably furnished.

The streets of Jerusalem are, as in all eastern cities, narrow; they are paved, which is unusual, with large, red-looking stones; there is no foot-way, and the gutter is down the middle of the street. The shops, in shape, resemble those in Cairo: they are abundantly supplied with goods of the commonest description. The bustle was very great in consequence of the pilgrims, and in some places it was difficult to walk along from the crowd. The bazaars are dark, long, narrow passages, situated in the Mahommedan quarter. The city is divided into the Frank, Armenian, Jewish, and Mahommedan quarters: the Jews are the most numerous, amounting to between three and four thousand; the Mahommedans come next; except during Holy Week, the Armenians are the least populous. Each of the four sects of Christians—namely, the Greeks, the Latins, the Armenians, and the Copts, have large convents, capable of

accommodating many hundreds of persons. That of the Armenians is the wealthiest, having some 3,000 pilgrims in it at present, each person paying about £5 sterling, for board and lodging during the festival. Such is the grasping avarice of the priests, that the Greek pilgrims are stripped of all the money they have, before quitting the city, and but for the provident arrangement of their consul at Jaffa, who compels them to secure their passage back in the steamer, before starting for Jerusalem, they would not have the means left for returning to their homes. The poor creatures are so enthusiastic, that they willingly give up all they have to their grasping spiritual advisers.

The Armenian convent is in a delightful situation, near to Mount Zion: they have a fine garden. The Greek convent is the largest, and has to provide for the greatest number of visitors. The appearance of the courtyard of this convent was very bustling; hundreds of pilgrims had just arrived, and were occupied in unloading their mules and camels, and removing their contents into the convent. The Russian, from the banks of the Volga and the Black Sea; the Greek, from the Levant; the subjects of the Sultan, from Constantinople, Syria, Damascus, and

Aleppo: all were mixed up together, and the confusion of languages was bewildering. Women, and children of all ages, were being unpacked from wicker baskets. It is astonishing what they must have gone through to reach the Holy City in time for Easter. Once having made the pilgrimage to Jerusalem, they return with the full conviction that for the rest of their natural lives they are safe, and that nothing can keep them out of heaven at last!

The Frank quarter commences on entering the Jaffa gate. On the right is Mount Zion, where the new episcopal church is erected: here, also, the English consul resides. It is the highest part of the city, and commands a view of the Mount of Olives.

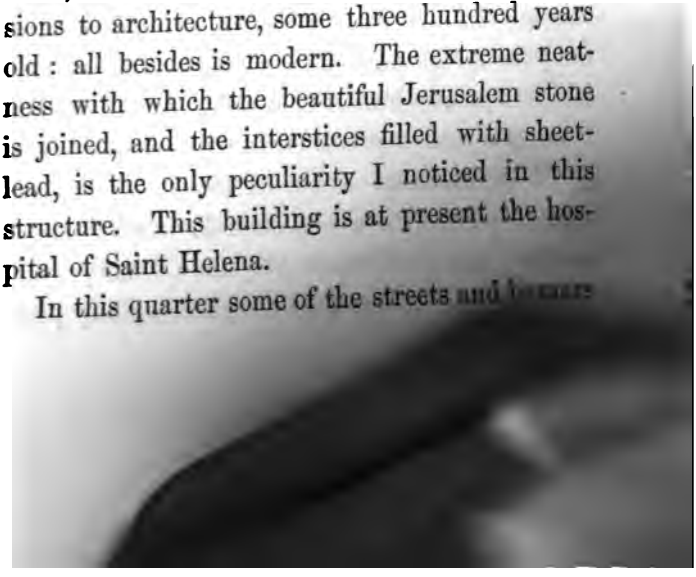
The Jews' quarter lies between Mount Moriah and Mount Zion. It is very dirty, but interesting in other points of view. My first visit to this quarter was on a Saturday, the Sabbath of the poor Israelites. Descending into the valley, which separates Mount Zion from Mount Moriah, I found myself opposite to an ancient wall, composed of immense blocks of stone. Along this wall the Jews, to a considerable number, were reading, in a loud, melancholy tone, their prayers to Jehovah. It was the celebrated wailing place

of the poor, forsaken children of Israel; and here they were, mourning their desolate condition, forsaken of God, as they say in their heart-rending prayers, and calling to mind the former glories of that sad spot.

A few yards further on, is a small portion of an immense arch, of unquestionable antiquity, most probably the remains of the bridge which separated the temple from Mount Zion, and of which mention is made in the visit of the Queen of Sheba to King Solomon, as the "ascent by which he went up into the house of the Lord."—1st Kings, x. 5.

The Mahommedan quarter occupies the lower portion of the city in the neighbourhood of Mount Moriah. The best houses are in this quarter, but their exterior has nothing to recommend them. In this quarter there are several fountains, and a building of considerable pretensions to architecture, some three hundred years old: all besides is modern. The extreme neatness with which the beautiful Jerusalem stone is joined, and the interstices filled with sheet-lead, is the only peculiarity I noticed in this structure. This building is at present the hospital of Saint Helena.

In this quarter some of the streets and bazaars



are supposed to be paved with the marble of the ancient temple. Thus trodden under foot by the Gentiles, how literally are the prophecies being fulfilled respecting this city. Close to the new English church on Mount Zion is the tower of Hippicus, built by Herod; and, with the exception of another tower to the north, and the remains of the arch, there is nothing left of ancient Jerusalem.

The Mosque of Omar occupies the site of Solomon's Temple: it is impossible to gain admittance in a Frank dress, and to assume a Mahommedan one would be running a great risk, in the event of detection. The Mahommedans in Jerusalem are far more bigoted than in Egypt.

I inadvertently walked, one day, into the court of this mosque, having mistaken the gateway for that of St. Stephen's gate, on my road to the Mount of Olives. I was suddenly seized hold of, very roughly, and turned round, by a fanatical-looking fellow, with his hair in wild confusion, and his eyes ready to start out of their sockets.

On mentioning the circumstance to the landlord of the hotel, he congratulated me on my escape, and said that it was surprising I returned without having stones thrown after me.

The English episcopal church has only just

been finished; it is built of beautiful white stone; it is a moderate-sized and exceedingly elegant structure, highly finished, without elaborateness: the interior fittings are simple, and in good taste. The altar has large, beautifully-polished slabs of black marble, having the Commandments written upon them in the Hebrew character. There is an organ, and the church is furnished with handsome lamps, for evening service. The entire appearance is that of one of our newly-finished places of worship at home, where money has not been spared. The window above the altar commands a view of the Mount of Olives. The present Bishop, Dr. Gobat, has been appointed about six years by the King of Prussia; he is a Swiss, and is much respected. The church was built out of funds, amounting to upwards of £60,000, the bequest of an English lady. The senior chaplain, the Rev. J. Nicolayson, is now in England; he has been here many years—upwards of twenty, I believe; he is very much respected, and his return is anxiously looked for. Mr. N. is a Dane by birth: previous to his connexion with Jerusalem he was a missionary in Abyssinia. There are three services every Sunday—the first, at seven, in Hebrew; the second,

at ten, in English ; and the third, in German, at three. There is also a service every week-day morning at seven, in Hebrew. The church, with the exception of the bishop's income, is supported by the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel amongst the Jews. The income of the bishop is raised from the handsome endowment of the King of Prussia, amounting to about £600 per year. This endowment was conditional, that England should fund a like sum, thus making the bishop's salary about £1,200 ; but England has never yet fulfilled her part of the contract ; and our bishop—for he is a naturalised Englishman, and took his degree at one of our universities—is thus indebted to a foreign potentate for his income. The arrangement between Prussia and England is, that they alternately have the appointment. The last diocesan, Dr. Alexander, was appointed by England ; his remains are interred in the solitary cemetery at the foot of Mount Zion. No marble marks the spot!

The great focus of attraction in Jerusalem is the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. Here are centred the places of worship of the rival Greek and Latin Churches, as well as the Armenian and Coptic Christians. Within a stone's throw of the

Via Dolorosa is an immense building, surmounted by a huge dome; and radiating from this structure are the different chapels pertaining to the different sects.

During Holy Week the pilgrims are permitted to remain all night in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre; they are locked in at sunset, and the doors are thrown open at sunrise: the number each night amounts to some thousands, leaving a very disagreeable effluvium for the rest of the day, the effect of so many human beings sleeping in such a confined atmosphere. The most splendid, and by far the largest, of these places of worship branching off from the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, belongs to the Greek Church: it is richly decorated in every part, and some hundreds of gold and silver lamps are suspended from the ceiling.

Ascending a flight of steps on the right-hand side of the great entrance, I was conducted into the Chapel of the Crucifixion. It is divided in the centre by an archway; the right-hand recess marks the spot where our Lord was nailed to the cross; that on the left the place of its elevation. Silver and gold lamps, constantly burning, cover the ceiling—the gifts, from time to time, of pious

individuals. A cleft in the rock is visible from beneath, which, according to tradition, was rent at the solemn hour of our Saviour's death.

On the opposite side of the rotunda is the chapel belonging to the Latins. It is a very small and insignificant affair as compared to the Greek church. Near to this is another chapel, appertaining to the Syrian Christians. Behind this chapel is shown a grave, hewn out of the solid rock, said to have belonged to Joseph of Arimathea.

Passing on a few steps further, and descending a stone staircase, is the chapel of Helena, where, in her presence, the cross was said to have been discovered.

The ceremonies of the different Churches during holy week, are very imposing. I shall proceed to describe a few of them. The struggle to obtain possession of the holy sepulchre, before the shrine of which all the Churches perform their ceremonies, is so great that very frequently the first service commences at one or two o'clock in the morning.

When I arrived, at eight o'clock on Palm Sunday, the early Greek and Armenian services had been celebrated, and the Latins were in possession. The Latin Church is by far the most re-

spectable; its numbers are influential, and educated, in comparison to the Greek establishment. Nearly all the English and American visitors in Jerusalem were to be seen attending, and frequently assisting at the services of the Latin Church during Holy Week.

Exactly under the great dome, now just crumbling into ruins, and which the squabbling of the different Churches prevents being put into a state of repair, is the holy sepulchre—a very small mausoleum, only large enough to admit four persons. It is reached by a flight of marble steps, and is lighted by silver lamps. The heat and crush was so great, that I could only remain in it a few moments. The marble floor of the anteroom was covered with prostrate pilgrims.

The ceremony of blessing the palms is, I believe, the same in all the Latin Churches; the only new feature being the palm-leaf, which was used, instead of other kinds, as in Rome and elsewhere. The palms are brought from Bethlehem and all the villages round about, very prettily arranged, and they are purchased by the congregation generally the day before. During the ceremony they are placed upon the altar; and, when the blessing is over, a procession is formed round the Church of

the Sepulchre, consisting of the priests and the entire congregation, each person carrying a lighted wax taper in his hand, the priests leading the procession. The crowd was immense, and the smell of the incense almost overpowering.

It was a delightful contrast our own quiet Church afforded at ten o'clock, when the English service commenced, and the organ led off one of those simple melodies with which we are accustomed to open service in our own happy land. Among the congregation, which was numerous, I noticed a few turbaned Jews, who attend occasionally, attracted by the music and singing.

The most striking event during the week, with the Latin Church, is the ceremony of the crucifixion; and with the Greeks, the fire. The Latins commenced their services on Good Friday, at three o'clock in the afternoon, and they did not terminate until after midnight.

A large party was formed from our hotel on this occasion. On entering, we found nearly all the tourists who had been travelling in the East this season, assembled in the chapel: old familiar faces that, when last seen, were behind a cloud of tobacco-smoke in Shephard's divan, at Cairo, or scrambling along the ruins of Karnac and Thebes;

brave-looking, mustached, half-pay officers; judges, from India; and pale-faced ladies, from America, were seated in the stalls of the chapel. Presently, the officers approached, and placed in our hands a long wax taper. Hundreds of lights in another moment filled the building, which, until now, had been nearly in total darkness. The little door at the side of the altar was thrown open, and the Patriarch, with a strong possé of priests, gorgeously arrayed, entered. A chair of state was placed on the right-hand side of the altar, into which the Patriarch threw himself, apparently in an exhausted state, from over-work and long fasting, doubtless. Next, he underwent the duties of the toilet. A priest took off his robes; another carried them away, first kissing them. The cap was removed, and placed upon a cushion, like a precious relic as it was; then approached five or six meek-faced, downcast-looking priests, with feet bare, bringing different portions of apparel, of a more costly description, with which the first priest proceeded to invest his holiness. No kind mamma ever handled her six weeks' old baby more gently than did this great plump-cheeked dry-nurse of holy Mother Church; and the almost fainting condition to which the Patriarch was reduced

during the operation was pitiable in the extreme. I think I see him now, with his half-yard of sandy-coloured beard resting upon his chest, his hands helplessly lolling over the sides of the arm-chair, and his head on one side, with eyes closed, forming a picture not easily forgotten.

A beautiful new mitre was placed upon his head, and white kid gloves were tenderly pressed upon his hands by the white-robed official. The last act of this functionary was to place an immense signet ring upon the first finger of the right hand, and then the ceremony began.

First we had an explanatory sermon in Italian, from a very intellectual-looking man, with a pleasing address; the Patriarch sitting in the arm-chair, and the people standing behind, ready to charge into the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, with their lighted tapers, as soon as the sermon was over, which lasted about half an hour. A procession was then formed. The first detachment consisted of little boys, in red clothing, bearing long tapers, six a-breast. Next came a file of bare-footed Dominican friars. Then came the Patriarch, supported on each side by a dignitary of the Church. Afterwards followed the arm-chair; and lastly came the laity. Every

person in the procession carried an immense taper. In this order we moved along round the entire rotunda. Crowds of people belonging to the Armenian and Greek Churches were assembled along the line, to witness the procession, and in some places it was with great difficulty we could proceed. The noise, in the meantime, from all parts of the building, was terrific. The rival Greeks, being the most numerous, were able to prevent any one from hearing, except those who followed close after the Patriarch. Every twenty yards, or thereabouts, the procession stopped, and a sermon was delivered, of about twenty minutes' duration. Thus, during the night, we had from the different priests, sermons in Latin, French, Italian, Spanish, Arabic, English, and German. During the sermons, the Patriarch sate in the chair, and it was with considerable interest, towards the last, that we watched for the signal for the procession to proceed. At length we reached the flight of steps leading to the Church of the Crucifixion. This was the most difficult feat of the evening. To mount a steep, narrow, crowded staircase, with a lighted wax taper, and to keep it perpendicular, so as to avoid soiling your neighbour's coat with the melted wax, was a task

which few accomplished; and when we reached the small chapel, our tapers had melted away, many of them upon the collars of our coats and hair. One red-haired individual I saw, with the back of his head singed; but what will not enthusiasm accomplish? A military gentleman, or rather a person dressed as such, for he was only a captain in some county militia, told me that he should never permit his servant to remove the wax from his coat, "it would be sacrilege."

The sermon over, a small image of wax, to represent the Saviour, was produced. This was nailed to the cross. The cross was then raised, and placed in the socket, where its great original was supposed to have been erected. The pincers were employed to remove the nails, and the wax figure carefully taken down, and placed in a white linen napkin. This ceremony was performed in silence. The procession again formed, and returned down the staircase to the anointing stone. The ceremony of anointing the body lasted some time, and during its performance an accident occurred to a number of persons who had mounted a scaffolding ladder, used for lighting the lamps, some portion of which gave way, and about twenty people were thrown down upon the people

beneath. Several men were carried out insensible, with their heads cut open.

At this point of the evening's performance I retired from the church. The rest of the party came home about two hours after, having witnessed the concluding scene, that of placing the waxen effigy within the holy sepulchre!

On the next day the Greeks had their grand event. The pilgrims belonging to this Church firmly believe the fire which appears suddenly to issue from the holy sepulchre, to be supernatural, and the priests take care to encourage this conviction. A few years ago several persons lost their lives on this occasion, and Ibrahim Pacha, when he witnessed it, was so overcome by the crowded suffocating scene, that his soldiers carried him out, in a fainting condition. The authorities take every precaution to prevent a repetition of these occurrences. Strong detachments of soldiers are placed in the building, ready, at any moment, to interfere when necessary.

For some hours previous to the expected supernatural appearance, the Church was crowded in every part. The galleries were reserved, but admission is easily procured for Europeans. The exact time of the fire is uncertain. The people

are thus kept in a state of excitement bordering on madness. A few minutes before three o'clock the screams were terrific, for, on a sudden, fire was seen to rush out of two circular orifices, on either side of the holy sepulchre. In an instant thousands of wax tapers had caught the "sacred flame." The building was filled with smoke, which could be seen issuing out of the dome, and the inhabitants knew by this signal that all was over. A tremendous rush is always made to obtain the first lighted taper, and most fabulous sums of money are said to be given to the lucky individual for it. This is the period of danger to those below, in consequence of the rush made in the direction of the fire. In half an hour after, the Church was deserted, and in the streets of Jerusalem hundreds of persons might be seen, in every direction, hurrying home with the precious "fire."

Easter Sunday was a very quiet day, contrary to expectation. The Greeks had finished their celebration the day previous, and the pilgrims were leaving for the sea-coast, to be ready to join the steamers. At the Protestant church nearly all the English and American visitors were present. During the morning service, an

aged Israelite was baptised : the baptismal service was read in Hebrew. After the ceremony was over, the old man took the clergyman's hand, and placed it to his lips. Our German landlord of the hotel endeavoured to distinguish the day, by roasting an entire lamb stuffed with pistachio nuts, and producing a few bottles of the wine of Bethlehem, of rather better quality than ordinary.

The ceremony of washing the pilgrims' feet was performed by the priests of the Greek Church, in the open air, on Saturday.

The Latins distinguished Easter Sunday by grand high mass, the priests having on rich new dresses covered with jewels, the gift of the Emperor of Austria. The French consul was there in great state. The Latin church in Jerusalem is very rich ; Spain is a great benefactor. The Patriarch is a handsome, middle-aged man, with a magnificent beard. He is a good scholar. The authorities of the Latin convent had a violent quarrel with him last year. He appealed to the Pope, and succeeded in putting them down. He has it now all his own way.

It is impossible to give a full account of all the ceremonies going on during this week. The scene, from morning till night, was one of pain-

ful interest. The wild shouting and screaming by the different sects inside the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, more resembled a parcel of demons, than human beings. There is no kind of abomination, I was told, that is not practised inside this temple. The most orderly body by far are the Latins; the Coptic Christians are the most ignorant and violent. Part of Saturday, when they had possession of the holy sepulchre, they celebrated the crucifixion, by running round the sepulchre, screaming, shouting, and knocking every one down that was in their way, until, at last, the Turkish guard interfered, and stopped them. Several fights took place; sometimes very serious riots. The presence of the authorities is required during the whole week to prevent and put down all disturbance. Such is Jerusalem every year during that week, of all others, which should unite men in harmony and fellowship!

Near to the Via Dolorosa is a small chapel and convent belonging to the Knights of St. John; but little of the ancient building remains.

On Mount Zion, not far from the Protestant church, the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel among the Jews has lately established an hospital for the use of the poor Jews. Mr.

Finn, the English consul, took me over this establishment. There are upwards of thirty beds; but in consequence of this being the Passover week, most of the Jews are away, as nothing short of very severe illness will prevent them from keeping the Passover in their own houses. This institution has been highly successful; the Jews resort to it with confidence. The French consul has just commenced a similar institution, which is not confined to any particular class or sect.

I was much struck with the poor Jews wherever I met with them in the streets of Jerusalem; they appeared so forlorn, forsaken and miserable, that a stronger confirmation of the curse that is upon them, cannot be imagined than their appearance presents. Some of their women are very beautiful. They are all fair, light-haired, blue-eyed creatures, with pleasing, intellectual countenances, though somewhat sorrowful and melancholy. Who cannot help feeling an interest in these wonderful people, as he strolls along the streets of the City of David, and thinks upon the promises of future recognition which Jehovah has declared in store for them? The society in London deserves well from all classes for its well-

directed efforts to gain the confidence and relieve the necessities of these poor deserted people.

I will now, with the reader's permission, conduct him to a few of the principal spots outside the city gates. Going in an easterly direction, and passing through St. Stephen's gate, a fine view of the Mount of Olives and the valley of Jehoshaphat is obtained. At the bottom of the valley, the approach to which is very precipitous, is the dry bed of the brook Cedron. On the other side of the valley, at the foot of the Mount of Olives, and enclosed in four high stone walls, is the Garden of Gethsemane. Those few old olive-trees that we see in the centre are supposed to be upwards of a thousand years old. It is a simple, quiet, unpretending spot, away from the noise and bustle of the city. The Latins have possession of it, and religious services are sometimes performed there.

Let us now ascend the hill before us, called the Mount of Olives, one of the best authenticated localities round the city. A few scattered olive-trees are planted here and there. Numerous winding paths lead to the summit, which is about six hundred feet above the valley. A rough cultivation of the soil is attempted in some places,

where barley and maize are just peeping up among the stones. The ascent is rather steep; but what a view is obtained from the summit! At the apex of the hill is a mosque. In the centre of this building the old guardian pointed to an imprint of a human foot, and informed me that Christ went up to heaven from thence, leaving this impression on the stone. But we shall now ascend the tower of the mosque. An old Mussulman made his appearance, with a bunch of keys, and, opening the door, invited me to enter a small room. A pipe and cup of coffee were handed to me, a preliminary which it is customary to comply with all over the East before proceeding with the business in hand—a dreadfully expensive custom say you, my dear Cockney friend? Not at all: a piaster, value twopence-halfpenny, suffices: if you presented him with but half that amount there would still be the same polite appreciation of the present which a Mahommedan always exhibits. This, at least, is a rare merit, and a great novelty to a European.

From the tower of this mosque is one of the most magnificent views in the world. Looking westward, we have before us the city of Jerusa-

lem, "set on a hill." Within its high walls are seen hundreds of minarets and white domes, glittering in the meridian sun. Above all rises the lofty cupola of the Church of the Sepulchre, and the magnificent dome of the Mosque of Omar, on Mount Moriah. Beyond is the new Protestant church on Mount Zion, and close to it are seen the beautiful green cypress trees in the garden of the Armenian convent. The houses have no chimneys—consequently, smoke is never seen hovering, as in European cities. The valley of Jehoshaphat, and the lower part of the Mount of Olives, looking towards the city, are covered with marble tombstones. This is the Jews' cemetery. The side of the opposite hill is the Mahommedan burying-ground. Tradition points to the valley of Jehoshaphat as the spot where the world will be judged at the last day; both the Jews and Mahommedans agree in this belief. The view eastward is of a totally different character, being wild and gloomy in the extreme. About two miles distant is the quiet little unpretending village of Bethany, sacred to the memory of Lazarus, Martha, and Mary. The summits of numberless hills are seen beyond, stretching towards the plain of Jericho, which is about twenty

miles distant. The valley of the Jordan is easily distinguished by the narrow ridge of verdure which separates the wilderness of Judea from the lofty range of mountains on the other side of the Jordan. At the foot of these mountains, looking in a south-easterly direction, is the Dead Sea. Towards the south the view is not extensive, in consequence of the hills around Bethlehem. Descending the hill by another path into the valley of Jehoshaphat, the small ruined village of Siloam is reached; and crossing the valley, over the brook Cedron, a few steps farther, is the Pool of Siloam, where the blind man, whose eyes Christ anointed with clay, was sent to wash, and received his sight.

Three valleys join at this point — that of Jehoshaphat in the east, the valley of Hinnom to the south-east, and the valley of Tyropæon to the south. The valley of Hinnom is a wild, gloomy defile, very narrow and barren. Mount Zion is outside the city walls, or rather a great portion of it is so; in the time of our Saviour it was all within the gates. To the south of Mount Zion is the Hill of Evil Counsel. That portion of Mount Zion not within the city gates is used as a cemetery. There are upwards of sixty ceme-

teries round Jerusalem. The Mahommedans have theirs chiefly in the north-west and eastern suburbs ; the Jews, on the western slope of the Mount of Olives; and the Christians, on Mount Zion.

The most remarkable portion of the city walls is that on the east-side, overlooking the valley of Jehoshaphat ; some of the blocks of stone are of such an immense size, as to induce the belief that they must have originally formed a portion of the temple. I measured some that were twenty-four feet in length. Dr. Robinson states his belief that they are of the time of Solomon. The beautiful golden gate is in the centre of the eastern wall, and is bricked up. The Mahommedans have a tradition that the Christians will one day enter through this gate as conquerors.

The entire circuit of the city walls is about three miles. There are four gates — the Jaffa and Bethlehem gate, the Damascus gate, the Stephen's gate, and the gate of Zion ; but the first is the principal thoroughfare.

CHAPTER VIII.

The Jordan, Jericho, and the Dead Sea.

An excursion to the banks of the Jordan and the shores of the Dead Sea, is one of the most exciting and interesting events in a Syrian tour, especially if, as in my case, it is made during the annual visit of the Greek pilgrims to the former locality.

I left Jerusalem along with some eight thousand pilgrims, on Monday morning, April 6. As the excursion would occupy two or three days, the tents and Abdallah were once more in requisition. Leaving behind most of the cumbersome contents of our canteen, and selecting only a few of the more useful articles absolutely necessary, we contrived to stow away all that was requisite upon two mules. It was after considerable delay and difficulty we were able to secure two saddle horses in addition. Every quadruped in Jerusalem capable of carrying a human being, had been previously engaged by the pilgrims.

A Turkish guard, of several hundred men, always accompanies the expedition, to protect the pilgrims from the marauding hordes of Arabs who infest the vicinity of the Jordan. The expense is borne by the authorities of the Greek Church in Jerusalem.

For some hours previous to our start, the pilgrims had been marching along by the hotel, on their way to the Stephen's gate, and when we passed out of the city we were among the last to leave it. A large party of Americans could be seen wending their way down the valley of Jehoshaphat, a quarter of a mile a-head, as we left the city gate. The road, for some distance on each side, was lined with women and children, enveloped in large white muslin cloaks, the ample folds of which concealed all but the eyes. Having made the usual arrangements the day previous, with a party of Arabs—in other words, having complied with the customary backshish of 100 piasters, for protection, it was not incumbent upon us that we should keep close to the cavalcade. A well-mounted, thoroughly thievish-looking Arab was appointed to be our escort; his presence being proof sufficient to his wandering friends that we had paid for their forbearance.

After leaving the village of Bethany, we commenced descending more or less for nearly twenty miles towards the plains of Jericho. It was a mere bridle path the whole of the way. Cultivation there was little or none to be seen for the entire distance. It was a blazing hot day; the path for many a mile a-head could be distinguished by the clouds of dust which filled the air.

The continual descent became very fatiguing; at length, we reached the level plain of Jericho, which is 3,000 feet of descent, at least, from Jerusalem.

The change was very agreeable. Before us, for some miles, was a flat country, partially cultivated, and covered with low bushwood. Beyond, intervened the wilderness of Judea, bounded by the valley of the Jordan, with the mountains of Moab in the distance, from the summit of one of which, Mount Nebo, Moses first saw the Promised Land. A few miles farther on, we left the track of the pilgrims, whose encampment was near to the village of Jericho, and struck into the low jungle path on our left, and arrived, about three o'clock in the afternoon, at a delightfully sequestered spot, near to the fountain of Elisha. Beside the stream whose

waters the Prophet healed, we pitched our tent for the night. Early the next morning, two hours before sunrise, Abdallah informed me, that he knew by the signal-fires, which he could distinguish about four miles off, that the pilgrims had commenced their march. We were not long in following them, leaving the mule-drivers with instructions to remove with the tents to the neighbourhood of the pilgrims, in order that we might return with them on the following morning to Jerusalem. We proceeded at a brisk trot over the plain. Near to the village of Jericho are extensive fields of wheat, but I was told the Arabs from the other side of the Jordan frequently came, and cut the crop before ripe, and carried it away. The village is now nothing more than a few mud hovels, surrounded by a high thorn fence, which offers greater obstacles to the bare feet of the wandering marauders, than a more durable one of stone would. Shortly after leaving the village, we found all vegetation to cease: the country became wild and desolate; not a human being could we discern in any direction. The pilgrims had already reached the river, some six or eight miles distant. We were now traversing the wilderness of Judea. I was attracted by the

sight of eight or ten immense eagles, roosting upon a tree. We saw several jackals and hyenas. About two miles beyond the village, we passed an ancient tower, which was a conspicuous object for some miles.

The neighbourhood in which we were now travelling was reported to be infested with robbers, consequently we kept a good look out. Two years ago, an Englishman was robbed of everything by a party of Bedouins, who, under pretence of begging some tobacco, approached near enough to seize hold of the reins of his horse, and another instantly disarmed him of his pistols.

Soon after six o'clock, we reached the narrow valley of the Jordan, and met the first detachment of pilgrims just returning, as we decended to the water's edge. The spot chosen for this annual submersion is at a bend in the river, which is here very rapid. The pilgrims form themselves into small parties, and one, more athletic than the rest, enters the stream first, and dips the others, one by one, until the whole party have been baptised. The greatest attention is paid to decorum by these poor people: children of all ages undergo the submersion; it was an extraordinary sight to witness. The

banks were covered with people either preparing to bathe, or who had done so.

The great majority of the pilgrims had bathed already when we arrived. The Turkish soldiers were preparing to return to the camp. A soldier was beating a drum, the signal to those still in the water to make haste; whilst numbers were scattered among the tall cane brakes and willow-trees. From the latter they select sticks, which become objects of great veneration when they reach their homes. Some of the Jordan water they take back with them in small tin bottles; and every pilgrim returns with two or more of these slung at his side.

No casualty occurred this year; but it is seldom that a season passes without some one being carried away down the stream, and drowned.

The banks of the Jordan are clothed with small trees and shrubs. The wild sugar-cane grows to an immense height. Game of all kinds, wolves, jackals, and panthers, abound.

Leaving the pilgrims to return with their escort to Jericho, we joined a party of Americans in an excursion to the Dead Sea. We arrived there in about two hours, travelling through a

wild and desolate country, over sand-hills, where nothing but a few scanty shrubs grew. The shores of the Dead Sea are gloomy in the extreme—surrounded by lofty mountains, whose shadows are thrown upon the water in clear, undiminished lustre. There was a considerable swell, and the waves beat upon the shore with their own well-known melancholy music, carrying the thoughts far away. I picked up several pieces of bitumen ; the appearance of the rocks in the neighbourhood bears unmistakable evidence of volcanic action. The water of the Dead Sea is much heavier than that of the ocean: several gentlemen bathed, and found it impossible to sink ; they had considerable difficulty, when swimming, to keep their feet under water. They all complained of a smarting sensation afterwards. It feels greasy to the touch, and has a strong, pungent, acrid taste.

The Dead Sea is about forty miles in length, and nine or ten miles wide. The depth varies ; in some places it is thirteen hundred feet deep. There is no visible outlet for the waters which flow into it from the Jordan : it is impossible to suppose that evaporation can carry off the surplus. Most probably, there is a subterraneous channel, which has not yet been discovered. Birds are rarely seen in the vicinity of this vast lake ; nei-

ther is a human habitation ever seen upon its shores. No boat navigates its waters, where beneath them lie buried "the cities of the plain." The whole scene is one of savage grandeur, which calls to mind the fearful judgments once enacted on this spot. Abdallah had stowed away in his wallet sundry wings of cold fowl and hard-boiled eggs, which, after the morning's ride, had become indispensable; so, sitting down upon the sand, in company with the rest of the party, equally as agreeably employed, an hour was passed very pleasantly. After lunch a trial of skill at shooting at a mark ensued, in which the Arabs who had accompanied us joined, and proved themselves very good marksmen.

At three o'clock we left the shores of the Dead Sea. Some of the party separated, to go to the convent of St. Sataba: the rest returned to the encampment. We found our tents pitched near to several others belonging to Europeans and Americans, in the neighbourhood of the pilgrims. After dinner I took a stroll amongst the poor pilgrims, who, for the most part, were sleeping either under the shadows of trees, or under tents, the women excepted, who were busy spreading their wet clothing upon the bushes, which were thus covered over in all directions.

The tents of the soldiers were placed together at one angle, and their patrol extended for a quarter of a mile square, enclosing the entire encampment. As evening approached, the scene was changed: hundreds of camp-fires blazed in the darkening sky; gigantic shadows of figures flitted backwards and forwards; the patrol raised their harsh, uncouth voices, as they called one to the other, walking backwards and forwards. In our division might be seen dragomen and mule-drivers, cowering over their camp-fires, smoking, and talking upon the events of the day.

I retired early to rest, but not to sleep: the night was excessively hot, and the din too great. Soon after midnight there was a stir amongst the pilgrims, and shortly after, Abdallah came to inform me that they had commenced their march towards Jerusalem. I rose hastily: our tents were soon struck, the mules loaded, and ourselves *en route* once more. By this time three-fourths of the cavalcade were in advance; but by dint of hard riding, in half an hour we were at the head of the procession, having left our baggage-mules to return more leisurely.

At the foot of the first hill we found ourselves just behind the advance guard, a position which

we maintained during the rest of the way to the city. The crowd was immense—camels, horses, mules, and asses, jumbled together, and scrambling along the steep path; women and children screaming with terror, as their steeds rushed along, skimming the verge of a precipice. Every now and then a halt took place, occasioned by a narrow defile not admitting more than one or two to pass abreast at a time. Several of these occurred of half an hour's duration. The moon was at the full, and shone in full lustre upon the scene, which it softened and subdued. As the path winded up the hills, a glimpse of the coming hosts, struggling onwards, could be seen for two or three miles in the rear. The moonbeams fell upon the firearms of the soldiers, which were thus rendered conspicuous for a long distance in advance. We entered the gates of the city soon after six o'clock. Crowds of people were waiting at that early hour to witness the return. Guns were fired in honour by the friends of the pilgrims as they were recognised. I was soon in my chamber, and asleep, thoroughly fatigued after the events of the last forty-eight hours.

BETHLEHEM.

A few days before leaving Jerusalem, I rode over to the village of Bethlehem, which is six miles distant on the road to Hebron. About half-way is a solitary convent, belonging to the Greek Church. From this point a beautiful view is obtained, having Jerusalem on one side and Bethlehem on the other. A few steps out of the regular path is a small circular building, which was pointed out to me as Rachel's tomb. The hill-sides in the neighbourhood of Bethlehem are terraced, and planted with vines. It is a part of the Mahommedan's creed neither to drink wine nor manufacture it; consequently the cultivation of the vine is in the hands of the Christian population, who produce in this neighbourhood a very pleasant, light, dry beverage, something similar in taste to raisin wine. The country all round is hilly, and the soil well adapted for the growth of the vine. The Arabs are too near neighbours to permit agriculture to be attended to, except in the immediate vicinity of the village. The inhabitants, who are all Christians, chiefly belong to the Greek Church. The popu-

lation is between four and five thousand: their principal employment is in the manufacture of mother-of-pearl ornaments and crosses, which find a ready sale amongst the tourists and pilgrims. We met great numbers going to Jerusalem with their wares, carrying them upon their backs. During my stay in this country I never met with a single wheeled vehicle; the nature of the roads renders their use next to impossible.

Bethlehem has always been a place of interest with tourists. The convent, which tradition asserts is built over the spot of the Nativity, is a large, unsightly-looking building, on one side of the village. We were shown down a flight of steps under the Greek chapel, into a small chamber, said to be the grotto of the Nativity. There was an altar; and a quantity of gold and silver lamps threw a strong light upon the tesselated marble pavement which marks the spot. The attendant made a sign for me to kneel down and kiss the pavement, but I declined. A few steps farther, we were shown the place where the wise men stood and worshipped.

Ascending another flight of steps, we reached the Greek chapel, and near to it are the chapels belonging to the Latins and Armenians. In

former times these united in using the ancient church built by the Empress Helena ; but their dissensions led to each providing separate chapels, branching out of the ancient building, now fast going to decay.

The streets of Bethlehem are merely dirty narrow passages. I could detect no signs that would make a stranger suppose he was surrounded by a Christian population. If anything, the people were more filthy in appearance than what I have seen in other Syrian villages.

CHAPTER IX.

Palestine.

I LEFT Jerusalem on Monday morning, April 13th, in company with several American gentlemen. Our baggage-mules, as they proceeded in single file along the narrow streets, extended for a quarter of a mile. It is an exciting moment when one starts upon a long journey through a country not before visited. We were bidding adieu for some time to come to the comforts of bedchambers and sitting-rooms. As we rode through the street there was considerable traffic going on: the pilgrims were making their final purchases of beads, crosses, and ornaments. In a few more days, Jerusalem would be once more nearly deserted, so that you might hear a pin drop in the streets, said the landlord. Outside the Jaffa gate there was scarcely a person to be seen. We halted for a few moments to take a last view of Mount Zion and the tower of Hipicus. The sun was shining upon us with intense heat; the barren hills around

the city, and the scattered groups of olive-trees, contrasted strongly with the scene we had just left. One by one we followed the narrow path before us in silence. Our baggage-mules we sent on by a nearer road, as we were going a couple of miles round, to visit the Convent of the Cross. After an hour's ride we reached the convent, which is situated in a sheltered position, at the bottom of a small valley, surrounded by naked hills. We were some time in gaining admittance. Visitors evidently were not expected; and it was with some difficulty an attendant could be found to conduct us over the establishment. It is a very poor convent; the only interesting object pointed out to us was a tesselated floor stained with blood, said to have been that of the early Christian martyrs, who suffered death on this spot. The monks were all gone to Jerusalem. We peeped into their cells, which were very clean, but nearly destitute of furniture.

A hot ride of four hours brought us to the village of Betin, on the road to Damascus, where we found our tents pitched for the night. In the neighbourhood there were about two hundred pilgrims, going to Aleppo, and the tents of two English parties, who had left Jerusalem an hour or

two before us. Altogether there were upwards of a dozen tents belonging to Americans and English. The pilgrims were very merry—dancing round their camp-fires, and making all sorts of uncouth noises. They had no tents; but the want of them did not appear to affect their spirits in the least. The evening was beautiful; and a cool breeze, which sprang up at sunset, was particularly welcome after the heat of the day.

Tuesday morning opened upon us cold, dark, and dreary: there had been rain and hail during the night. We started at seven o'clock. A three hours' ride brought us to Bethel, celebrated as the place where Jacob saw the vision of the ladder. Half-way between Bethel and Nablous is Shiloh, where the Israelites set up the Tabernacle, and where Samuel spent his childhood. Our path was round stone-covered hills. Large flocks of goats were feeding upon the scanty pasture. The pilgrims started an hour before us. We overtook them about mid-day; their line extended half a mile, winding round the hills, and forming a picturesque object when seen in the distance. My horse broke down with me near to Nablous; he was a poor, miserable, half-starved brute, the best that Abdallah could procure in Jerusalem, the pilgrims having

secured nearly every animal worth taking. It was fortunate the beast gave in so soon, as the chance of purchasing another was remote after leaving Nablous.

A ride of nine hours brought us about thirty miles, to the town of Nablous, the ancient Sychar. There is a population of about 10,000 here, chiefly Mahommedans. The town consists of one long narrow street, nearly a mile in length, ending in a bazaar. A brook runs down the middle of the street, for more than one-half of its length. As the horses went splashing through it, they sent the water over the foot-passengers, who took it all in good part, as if they were accustomed to it. The situation of the town is lovely. It is approached from the south through an avenue of fig and olive-trees. Lofty hills rise on each side, covered with hanging woods. About a mile before reaching the town, we passed Jacob's well, the place where our Saviour conversed with the woman of Samaria. A great number of horses were brought to the camp at night, and Abdallah bought two for eighteen hundred piasters, about seventeen pounds sterling. The tents were pitched just outside the town, beneath some olive-trees. The night was cold and

stormy. I expected every moment my tent would have been blown down. We were all anxious to commence the day's journey, and started by day-break. About two hours' ride brought us to Sebaste, the ancient capital of Samaria. The ruins of Sebaste are seen, from their elevated position, upon the crown of a high hill, for some distance. All that remains of Herod's city is a colonnade, and part of a wall.

The hill of Samaria commands a most extensive prospect. The Mediterranean is visible to the west, and the mountains on the other side of the Jordan, to the east. The country round about is rich; the valleys and plains are well cultivated. Our path lay through a country abounding in fig and olive-trees. We passed several orchards of apple-trees, in full blossom. Wild flowers enamelled the plains in great profusion: the purple lupin, the scarlet poppy, and the anemone especially, were very abundant, covering the fields completely; and the effect, when viewed from an elevated spot, with a dazzling sun shining full upon them, was very brilliant and beautiful. I observed a singular flower, with something the appearance of a water-lily, having the cup of a deep purple colour, resembling velvet.

We reached Jenin about four o'clock, and pitched the tents just outside the village, upon a green spot, covered with wild thyme, and in view of Mount Hermon, with its snow-covered heights, looking superb in the setting sun. Yesterday our day's journey was in Judea, to-day in Samaria, and to-morrow it will be in Galilee—interesting districts, especially to those who remember how frequently our Saviour passed through them, on his road to and from Jerusalem.

We left Jenin the next morning, by half-past six o'clock. Our road lay through the fertile plain of Esdrælon, extending from north to south, about fourteen miles, and from east to west, about five-and-twenty. Several great battles have been decided here. The Romans, the Crusaders, and, in modern times, Napoleon, made this their great battle-ground. The country is slightly undulating, and the soil is richer than any I have met with in Palestine. After a ride of five or six hours, we reached the northern boundary of the plain, and commenced ascending a steep mountain-path, which led to the village of Nazareth.

In about two hours more we came in sight of the village, delightfully situated at the bottom

of a valley, surrounded by green hills, and embosomed in orchards, where fig and olive-trees grow more luxuriantly than in any other part of Palestine. Nazareth is built on the side of a hill. It is a small town, and contains about three thousand inhabitants, two thousand of whom are Christians belonging to the Greek Church.

I ascended "the brow of the hill whereon the city is built," to the spot where the Jews are said to have led Jesus, to cast him down headlong. Here I beheld one of the most magnificent views in Palestine. To the north was Mount Hermon, distant some thirty or forty miles, with the Lebanon range beyond; to the south, the fertile plain of Esdrælon, and the hills behind Jenin; to the east, the mountains beyond the Jordan, rising abruptly several thousand feet; nearer, to my right, was the beautiful Mount Tabor, covered with vegetation to its summit; and looking towards the west, was the calm, placid, Mediterranean Sea, Mount Carmel, and the Bay of Acre.

At the foot of the hill, and half-way up, was the village of Nazareth, with its cactus fences, enclosing small patches of gardens. The white

stone of the buildings, shining in the sun, gave the village a clean and pleasing appearance. A little farther down the valley, about fifteen minutes' walk, is a large fountain, the only one, I think, in the village. A number of young women, with water-jars on their heads, were going to and fro: they wear a large quantity of silver coins, called majedees (about the size of half-a-crown), strung together round the forehead, reaching down in festoons on either side. The hill was covered with flowers, such as in England would be considered a choice collection: the mignionette was in great abundance, scenting the gale delightfully.

Our encampment at the foot of the hill, from whence could be seen issuing wreaths of smoke, occasioned by those useful fellows, the cooks, who were busy preparing the dinners, was no unwelcome feature in the landscape. After a long, fatiguing day's ride, this meal is always an event of consequence, followed up, as it usually is, by the tchbook, coffee, and a quiet night's rest.

This kind of life is full of excitement. Fresh scenes and adventures keep the mind in continual anticipation of "to-morrow;" and how much of

our happiness—in this life, at least—is made brighter by anticipations!

The next morning I proceeded alone to Cana, the rest of the party having decided upon visiting Mount Tabor, and going from thence to Tiberias, where we met again in the evening.

After leaving Nazareth, the country became wild and uncultivated. The modern village of Cana is about two hours' distance from Nazareth. Many persons doubt this being the Cana of the Scriptures. The priests, however, have adopted it, and show you an old chapel, having a rude painting of the marriage feast, and two large water-pots, about four feet high: they tell you these were the original jars which contained the water that was made wine! The church is in a miserably dilapidated condition.

One of the greatest drawbacks to the pleasures of travelling in Syria is the unsatisfactory nature of even the best authenticated spots. Priestcraft, in all ages, is the same. The vocal Memnon and the water-pots of Cana, each in its way, has been made to contribute wealth, power, and influence.

After leaving Cana, the road stretches along for miles in a pleasant valley. On the left

is a hill, said to be the one where our Saviour performed the miracle of feeding the five thousand. A little way beyond, the first glimpse of the Sea of Galilee is obtained : a wild mountain track, scarcely wide enough for the horses' feet, leads down to the water's edge; and the descent is very considerable. Approached from a high mountain, the view is grand. Where now are the fishermen who used to mend their nets on its shores ? In this neighbourhood our Saviour spent many years, and from among the simple population he chose his Disciples. Here the multitude followed him, to whom he loved to display his miracles. It is remarkable that he never performed a single miracle at the village of Nazareth, twenty miles distant. Tiberias is now the only town upon the borders of the lake ; we approached it towards sunset, and pitched our tents just outside the walls.

Tiberias is one of the sacred towns of the Jews, second only to Jerusalem and Hebron ; it is the most unhealthy town in Syria. The inhabitants are a sickly-looking race. The place is subject to volcanic disturbances ; in 1837, an earthquake destroyed most of the buildings, and a great portion of the walls of the town, along

with the Governor's house. About one-fourth of the population are Polish Jews, a poverty-stricken, miserable-looking people. There are a Greek convent and a few Christians in the town.

Our route the next morning was along the margin of the lake, passing the supposed sites of Magdala, Bethsaida, Chorazin, and Capernaum: not a vestige remains of these places. The northern shores are covered with wild shrubs and flowers; the oleanders in great profusion were just coming into blossom. The lover of flowers should visit Syria in spring-time; he will then see the greatest variety. Three miles from Tiberias, we passed a beautiful fountain, about 100 feet in diameter, which flows into the lake. Shortly after leaving the northern shores, the path ascends a steep hill, and continues through barren, gloomy passes, with occasional glimpses of the lake. At length, we commenced to descend, having been for three hours toiling along a very rugged path. At the foot of the hill is an old khan, with a deep well of pure water. Here we stopped to lunch. Near to this spot, one of the party discovered the well where Joseph was supposed to have been concealed by

thick quilt, a tin bottle for water, and an immense stick, or pole, is the sum-total of all their moveable goods and chattels.

We left early the next morning. The road was very fatiguing for the first three or four hours, being covered with large loose stones, so that it was with difficulty the horses and baggage-mules proceeded. The day was very warm. Mount Hermon was about ten miles distant, on our left, rising out of the plain very abruptly, and having little or no vegetation upon its sides. The plain became more fertile as we proceeded. A long range of hills was visible about forty miles distant, in the district of Kelb Hauran, inhabited by the Druses. About four o'clock, we came to a village of wretched huts. A few miserable people crawled out of these hovels, and regarded us listlessly as we passed. They were very poor, and almost destitute of clothing. A few goats on the side of the hill was their only wealth. After a long and fatiguing day's journey, we came in sight of Damascus between six and seven o'clock, and encamped for the night, about four hours from the city, near to the village of Katanah.

My tent was pitched upon the banks of a small

stream, where some thousands of frogs kept up a concert all the night. At three o'clock in the morning we were on the road to Damascus. It was a delightful ride, through one of the finest plains in the world. For three or four miles before entering the gates, the road, on each side, was shaded by magnificent trees, and a constant succession of orchards, full of apple, walnut, fig, and olive-trees. It is not surprising that Damascus should always have been a large city, when its situation is taken into consideration. The river Burada, the Abana, or Pharpar of Scripture, runs through the entire plain, from north-west to south-east. The soil is deep and rich, growing almost everything that man requires—an unclouded sky overhead, artificial irrigation obtained without much labour or expense—a climate in which the fruits of different countries are brought to perfection; all contribute to make Damascus a desirable place of abode to the indolent Mussulman.

Mahomet is said to have exclaimed, when he first came in sight of Damascus, that he knew but of one paradise, and he therefore would not enter this one.

We entered the gates just after sunrise. The

shops in the bazaars were not yet open, and but few people were to be seen, as we rode through long narrow streets, to the Frank quarter, where the only hotel in the city is situated. Entering a fine courtyard, through a little narrow passage, we found ourselves welcomed by the Greek proprietor of the hotel, who received us gladly. In the centre of the court, which was paved with marble, there was a small fountain, and ranged round it were flowers and orange-trees. At the extreme end of the court, under a roof ornamented in the Alhambra style, was an elevated divan, having three sides, cushioned in the eastern manner. On the opposite side were lofty chambers, in one of which, containing four beds, was a fountain of cold water, always running into a marble basin, large enough to bathe in. I would, however, advise all who intend using it, to take the precaution I did, of having it first cleaned out, for, on emptying the bath, a large eel was discovered at the bottom.

This was the most thoroughly Arabian-Night-ish dwelling I met with in the East. Nevertheless I enjoyed myself amazingly, after the fatigues of the journey. The hotel is kept by a former dragoman of Lord B. He has not been

more than a twelvemonth in Damascus, and his past success not by any means extensive. I can recommend his hotel as one of the best in Syria. The beds are clean, the *vin du pays* tolerable, and the cuisine very respectable.

CHAPTER X.

Damascus, Beyrout, and Smyrna.

DAMASCUS has a population of about one hundred and fifty thousand. It is said to be seven miles in length, and about two in breadth. Here are about fifty thousand Christians, chiefly belonging to the Greek Church; some five or six thousand Jews, and the rest Mahommedans. A few years ago it was death to any European to be found in the streets of Damascus. Things are now greatly changed; and a person in a Frank dress is respected, and protected by all save the dogs: and I advise every one to take a "korbág" always with him, and to make use of it upon the canine population, if he wishes to make his observations in peace. They are a sad, lazy, rascally set of animals, and will scarcely give themselves the trouble to move out of your way, or that of your horse; but will prop themselves against the wall, and bark as long as you are in sight. On the morning when we were leaving Damascus, our party extended,

in single file, a quarter of a mile, and every second person was armed with a long whip. The dogs, as usual, set up their barking, which we very soon changed into a howl, "long, loud, and deep." Not being used to encounter more than one or two foreigners at a time, these whelps were unprepared for the whips of a long line of aggrieved Americans and English. Our parting with them was, therefore, a noisy one, and long to be remembered by the dogs of Damascus.

The bazaars are very interesting. They are long, narrow buildings, and differ only from the streets in being covered in by lofty, pointed wooden roofs; the light is admitted from the sides, and is so arranged as to exclude the sun's rays: they are more crowded than the streets, and the trades are kept separate. It was amusing to stroll along during the heat of the day in these cool, shady bazaars, watching the process of buying and selling. The most interesting groups of purchasers were the Arabs of the Desert. These simple people were arriving in great numbers from all parts of the Eastern Desert during my visit. One man among them was always the spokesman. At every fresh offer by the seller a consultation was held among them, and the bargain was brought to a con-

clusion generally in a few minutes. Pretty, dark-eyed children were running about, playing at hide-and-seek among the crowd, which was always good-humoured. Ices and iced sherbet were vended in the streets and bazaars at half a piaster the glass. The baths were crowded; and the occupants could be distinctly seen from the bazaars, in passing, reclining upon the divans, and covered with large white calico sheets. Crowds of boys were gathered round the cooks' shops, where the smell of savoury roast kebobs formed the chief attraction. The silks and shawls of Damascus are celebrated all over the world. The prices of some of the latter are enormous; they are worn round the head as turbans, or round the waist as scarfs; and a shopkeeper will frequently wear a turban worth £20 or £30. It is surprising what an expense the Mahommedans go to for these articles.

The shops are, generally speaking, larger than at Cairo, and are better stocked with goods. They are all, however, upon the same plan. The more wealthy merchants keep their goods in khans. Here, also, the European bankers have their offices. In one of these warehouses I saw some very costly shawls and scarfs, some of which

were worked in gold and silver : the streets are tolerably well paved, and at night are dimly lighted with oil lamps. Soldiers, in European costume, belonging to the Sultan, are the only police I saw ; they appear to have no particular duties, and seldom or ever interfere with the people, unless a violent disturbance takes place.

The houses, in general, have a very mean appearance outside : no windows open upon the streets : they are, in general, built of rough stone, and stuccoed with mud, but within are spacious, and frequently handsome. Some of the best houses are inhabited by the Jews. The English consul resides in a magnificent mansion, having a large garden in the centre of the court. Rents are absurdly low : for £20 a-year, a palace may be occupied.

An American Baptist mission has lately been introduced, and an intelligent PHYSICIAN is placed at its head. A Turkish coffee-house is well worth a visit. I went to one situated on the banks of the ancient river Pharpar. The nargila was brought to me, ready lighted, and the fragrant vapour, as it came bubbling through the water into the mouth, was almost imperceptible, so that I no longer wondered how the Turks managed to

"consume their own smoke," as is customary when smoking the nargila. Under a tree, in the centre of the court, were four Arabs performing upon musical instruments, in shape somewhat resembling the banjo. Little boys were running about, with tiny egg-shaped cups, filled with coffee, which is made quite thick, and drank when hot, without milk or sugar. Solemn-looking, long-bearded Mussulmen were playing at drafts, whilst others looked on. A fountain was in the centre, surrounded with citron and orange-trees. The river rushed along beneath, and rapidly disappeared under the arches of an old bridge, a little lower down the stream. The entire scene was novel and interesting, so different from what we meet with in any other part of the world.

In a by-street in the neighbourhood of the hotel, I was shown the house said to have belonged to Ananias, where St. Paul resided. It has been converted into a chapel by the Latins. It is remarkable that no tradition exists as to the spot where St. Paul's conversion took place; at least, I could not hear of any during my stay.

The mosques and public buildings in Damascus are very insignificant in appearance; with the

exception of one mosque, there is no edifice at all conspicuous.

Our English consul is greatly respected by the inhabitants. He is said to possess considerable influence on local matters with the authorities at Constantinople. He has just succeeded in obtaining the repeal of a tax, and the shops in the bazaars were illuminated in consequence.

I left Damascus on the 22nd of April, in company with a large party. The length of our cavalcade was the wonder of the inhabitants, who stared at us from their doors, as we passed along in single file through the narrow streets, in all the costumes imaginable, from a shooting-jacket to a Turkish dress. Shortly after leaving the streets, we commenced ascending the hill, which at first was laid out in orchards and gardens. As we ascended higher, the road became more toilsome, and the baggage-mules were constantly stumbling and falling, grinding the canteens and portmanteaus against the rocky side of the narrow path. Half-way up, we came to a guard-house, and a soldier demanded the town-dues, which we left the dragoman to settle, and proceeded onwards to the summit, from whence could be seen the entire of the immense

plain, with Damascus at our feet. The view was magnificent.

Our way led through gloomy defiles in the mountains, composed of limestone; and a very fatiguing ride, for three or four hours, we found it. At length we commenced descending on the other side, and reached a lonely valley, where the Abana winds along its rapid course. The country improved after reaching the valley. A great variety of trees appeared upon the banks of the river, and patches of cultivated land here and there on the sides of the hills. We were fortunate in having the company of an American gentleman, settled in Damascus, who was going to his summer residence in the mountains; and through his kindness we were enabled to find the fountain of El Fijeh, the finest in Syria. It is situated in a very retired and romantic spot, about four miles out of the road to Baalbek, and five hours from Damascus. The water rushes from beneath the mountain in such an immense volume, as to form a river nearly as large as the Jordan: it is clear, sparkling, and as cold as ice. Here we stopped to lunch; and after resting an hour, continued our route along the banks of the river, through a beautiful val-

ley, which at length opened into a plain, bounded by the lofty mountains of Lebanon. Towards sunset we reached the village of Zebedany, and pitched our tents in the courtyard of the khan, preferring our tents to the rooms of that dirty, dark building.

The evening was cold, and the village dogs and donkeys kept up such a clamor all night, that it was next to impossible to sleep. Early the next morning we were on the march towards Baalbek. The road, after leaving the village of Zebedany, continued along a valley for some miles, and we then commenced ascending a hill on our left. From the summit we obtained a view of the plain of Baalbek; and in two hours more we reached the village, and encamped in a small field near to the ruins.

BAALBEK.

The ruins of Baalbek are situated at the northern extremity of an immense plain, the ancient Cœle-Syria. The mountains of Lebanon, rising some thousands of feet on the east and west, enclose a tract of level country, which has always been considered one of the most fer-

tile districts in Syria. The ruins are on a most magnificent scale, scarcely inferior to those at Karnak. History is silent upon the origin of this temple. Some suppose it originally to have been built by Solomon for his Egyptian wife, the daughter of Pharaoh, and dedicated to Baal. I observed the Egyptian two-winged globe sculptured in several places, which would seem to favour this idea. Some of the columns are upwards of ninety feet high. There are six magnificent pillars standing alone in the centre of the ruins, supporting an architrave. Several eagles had their nests in the interstices of the cornice and capitals. The older portions of the temple are at the north-east end. Here there is a square tower, composed of immense blocks of stone, similar to the tower of Hipicus at Jerusalem. The more modern portion of the building is Grecian. Some of the blocks in the southern angle of the walls are sixty feet long, and twelve feet in diameter. Broken marble and granite columns lay scattered about in all directions. The only building standing complete is the sanctuary, which is of the Grecian order, in very beautiful proportions. A lofty tunnelled passage runs underneath the entire ruins from

north to south. A noble view is obtained from the upper walls, of the surrounding country. The village of Baalbek contains a few hundred inhabitants, chiefly employed in agriculture. It is close to the temple. There is a small Greek convent there.

We left Baalbek at six o'clock the next morning. For some hours our course was due south, through the undulating plain, which became narrower as we approached the southern extremity. A small stream runs in this direction, irrigating the country. The crops were more backward than any I had yet met with, but very promising. We passed near to two villages, and at two o'clock came to the town of Zaddeh, built upon the southern slope of a hill on the borders of the plain. The population is almost entirely Christian, belonging to the Greek Church. The sound of numerous bells pealing from the churches and convents echoed along the hillside — a sound never more welcome than when heard in a Mahommedan country. We passed a Druse female, wearing the peculiar headdress of her people—a horn about two feet long upon the forehead, covered with white muslin, something in the style of an unicorn ; it must be a

formidable weapon for an angry man to encounter. We found a comfortable lodging for the night in the house of a friend of the dragoman, in the upper part of the town, which I was very glad to avail myself of, being thoroughly tired of the tent, which, in these elevated plains, we found very cold and cheerless.

Early the next morning I was in the saddle, *en route* for Beyrout, and the last day's journey in Syria—anxious to bid good-bye to dragomen, tents, and Syrian misery. A toilsome ascent of some hours brought us to the elevated table-land of the Lebanon range. We had been informed that the Druses were up in arms through this district, and our party kept well together; but we found no occasion for our watchfulness—every one we met told us we had nothing to fear. Long caravans of loaded mules, carrying merchandise from Beyrout to Damascus, which we met, convinced us there was no truth in the reports the dragomen had been spreading ever since we left Jerusalem. A more lying set of rascals, as a body, than the dragomen the world cannot furnish. There is very little difference between them; but, if anything, I think the Maltese are the worse.

With what pleasure did I behold once more the beautiful waters of the Mediterranean Sea sparkling in the sun, from the summit of Lebanon: and as I gazed on the shipping in the harbour of Beyrout, I felt glad that the time was at hand when I should bid adieu to the country I had all my life been hoping some day to visit. The descent commenced about two o'clock, and lasted for three hours, at a brisk trot; the view, during this time, was superb, far surpassing any I have met with in any other part of the world. As we approached the lower range of hills, the roots of Lebanon, we passed through mulberry plantations, olive groves, and vineyards; behind us, the snow-capped heights of the great Lebanon range; and before us, the town and harbour of Beyrout, with, oh, welcome sight! the steamer in the harbour in which I was going to Smyrna. A ride through narrow lanes of an hour more brought us suddenly to the sea-side; and close at hand was one of the best hotels in all Syria—Demetri's. Eothen's Demetri—every one's Demetri. The house was very full, and most of the party were obliged to put up with chambers in the neighbouring dwellings. My luck, however, secured me a snug room on

the ground floor, where, in a few minutes more, I retired to devour the contents of a packet of letters from Europe.

The situation of Beyrout is considered the finest in Syria. Viewed from the sea it is superb : the fine range of Lebanon commences about two miles from the town ; the lower portions of the mountains are cultivated and well wooded. Country-houses are scattered here and there. The shape of these hills is remarkable—being round and conical, rising higher and higher as they recede towards the East. The shore is rocky ; the water, a clear, deep-blue colour ; and the sea-bathing I found delicious, after the fatiguing journey from Damascus.

Beyrout is a bustling, prosperous town — the most so in Syria. The harbour is safe ; and vessels from all parts of the world trade to the port. A French steamer plies once a-fortnight between Beyrout and Alexandria, and then proceeds to Marseilles. This is by far the best way of reaching Europe. Another steamer (Austrian) comes fortnightly from Smyrna, returning the next day for Constantinople, *via* Smyrna. The population of Beyrout is now about twelve or fourteen thousand. A few years ago it was only as many hundreds.

It was with great pleasure I found myself on board the Austrian steamer, the third morning, on my way homewards, *via* Smyrna. Three hundred pilgrims were on board: and about twenty Europeans and Americans occupied the first cabin, all thoroughly tired of Syrian travelling. Half the after-deck was railed off for the accommodation of the pilgrims, which made it very confined and disagreeable for the rest of the passengers. We reached Cyprus the next morning, but being in quarantine, were not permitted to land. The town appeared a miserable-looking place, with a few palm-trees and minarets. At night the sea became rough, and the captain put into a small creek, in a wild, romantic spot, surrounded by high mountains, on the coast of Asia Minor. The next morning we were at Rhodes. The English Consul came alongside, in a small boat. He is a stout, merry-looking personage, and tried to make us believe that he leads a jolly life here, but it was easy to see that he did not believe it himself. He has been consul six years in this place. It must be next to being buried alive, I should say.

On Saturday we reached Smyrna, and were landed at the quarantine—a large, gloomy house,

facing the sea, having a courtyard, and a small field in the rear. In this domicile we were confined for five nights. The proprietor of the hotel in the town supplies the European passengers with furniture and provisions. He sends servants and a cook into quarantine, and the result is highly satisfactory, for nothing could be better supplied than the table. We partook of our meals under a large lime-tree, in the courtyard. There was a good deal of scrambling the first night, for rooms, beds, chairs, &c.; but it was quite unnecessary, as there were plenty.

Early on the fifth morning the gates were thrown open, and in a few minutes after, we were all wending our way to the hotel, except one poor fellow, who was seized, the third morning, with small-pox, and left behind to the care of the Italian doctor. What must his sensations have been that morning, as he heard us leaving so merrily; a boy left at school for the holidays is a faint comparison to his position. The Sisters of Mercy, from a neighbouring nunnery, hearing of his misfortune, offered their services. They would have nursed him, and attended to all his wants, night and day, gratuitously; but he declined. I am no panegyrist of the Roman Ca-

tholic Church, but I cannot withhold my meed of praise when instances of disinterestedness like this come before me. It is a beautiful feature of Christianity, and never more lovely than when met with in foreign lands, and under the dominion of a hostile religion.

A stroll through the streets of Smyrna has, at least, the charm of novelty to a person arriving from a tour in Egypt or Syria. He meets with "lovely woman" in her becoming European costume. The Greek ladies are handsome, fine-made women, having large, brilliant black eyes, and a majestic step.

My brief sojourn in Smyrna was agreeable. Everything in this life is by comparison; and after the toilsome travelling of the last few months, to stumble on civilisation once more is charming. The news-room was a source of great interest. Reader, have you ever been without "news" for a long period? With what an appetite one sits down to a file of the *Times*, or *Galignani*, under such circumstances—spell-bound, devouring their contents.

I remained here two or three days, waiting for the French steamer to arrive from Constantinople. My *compagnons du voyage* had all

started for that capital. She at length arrived, twenty-four hours behind time. We stayed a few hours at Syra and Malta, and arrived in Marseilles the tenth morning after leaving Smyrna.

THE END.

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